

BLOCKADE

The Diary of an Austrian Middle-Class Woman 1914-1924

by Anna Eisenmenger

Ray Long & Richard R. Smith, Inc. New York, 1932

First American Edition, 1932

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE WHITE FRIARS PRESS LTD.

LONDON AND TONBRIDGE

DEDICATED TO ALL THE WOMEN IN THE WORLD

"Blockade" has been translated from the German by Winifred Ray.

PREFACE

BEFORE me lies a collection of little black diaries. Each of them represents a year and together they cover the period from 1914 to 1924. They contain a space for each separate day, but some of the spaces are blank. Often for a whole week or more nothing has been written. Other pages are crammed with notes scribbled with obvious haste and frequently illegible. Yet I have no trouble in deciphering them. Every word is burnt into my soul with letters of fire. They tell of events and experiences during the World War and the post-war years, experiences which at that time gave an aim and a purpose to my life, the life of an Austrian middle-class woman. They tell of my struggle against the want and misery of the war and post-war years. During the first years this struggle was waged mainly against the want and misery of others. Later—ah, later!—it became a desperate struggle against the poverty and distress which daily and hourly threatened to deprive me and all those dear to me not only of all our material resources but of life itself. To-day I scan these bald sentences, which to me say so much. Memories become living again, pictures rise up before my mind's eye. I feel my heart begin to throb. It is past, I tell myself. It can never happen again. Everyone who has survived the War must hate it and must foster this hate in others until all are at one in their abomination of war. And yet even now the newspapers report the launching of battleships, the building of submarines and the perfecting of military aeroplanes, bomb-throwers and new poison gases capable of killing every living thing over wide stretches of territory. The states are arming again, and in their parliaments the chosen representatives of their peoples deliver eloquent speeches extolling armed peace as the sole safeguard of a well-governed state. At the same time the League of Nations, the orchestra of perpetual peace, hopes to play war off the face of the earth. Will its harmonies ever be so potent as to drown all the war-songs or transform them into anthems of peace? And if men honestly believe in this possibility, why do they guard peace with new armaments? After my experience of the World War, hundreds of doubts assail my optimism and my belief in the intellectual and moral progress of man; hundreds of questions besiege me and remain unanswered. But, none the less, with all my weak powers I want to take my stand by the side of those who hate war and are fighting against war. And therefore I take my little notebooks in my

hand and let them speak, even though they rend my heart with the memories they evoke. They shall speak to those who have preserved their humanity and to those who, inspired by personal, party or national egoism, close their eyes and ears and harden their hearts, that they may not see nor hear nor feel any of the agonising distress that follows in the wake of war. Out of humanity and love towards my fellow-men my little notebooks shall raise their voice; out of that humanity and love which war must destroy with merciless consistency in order to be able to continue its baneful existence on earth; out of a love which bears on its banner the motto of sympathy with and forbearance towards the human race and mutual protection between man and man. And now I address an ardent entreaty to all the women in the world, to whom I dedicate these pages! To all women, without distinction of race or creed, of nationality or of party, to all women whom war would rob of one whom they love and cherish. Women of all nations, gather together all your powers of resistance and set yourselves unitedly against all war. Implant in the hearts of the children entrusted to your care the same hatred and loathing of war as of all that human society terms crime. Remember that neither to the victors nor to the vanquished can medals for valour, monuments to heroes or pensions for the disabled offer the smallest compensation for endless floods of tears and unspeakable sufferings shed and endured by millions of women. Let the unreflecting remember that every advantage reaped on the field of battle contains within itself the seed of new conflicts. Women of the world! See to it that this seed, which even now is once more resting in a blood-drenched soil, is never allowed to mature. Set in its place the tree of human reconciliation which concedes to every dweller upon this earth that which is their due: the right to live and a place in the sun.

A RETROSPECT

In the summer of 1914 our immediate family consisted of my husband, who was Director of a Department of a Vienna hospital, my eldest 22-year-old daughter, Liesbeth, married to Lieutenant Rudolf Stark, my 1-year-old grandson, Wolfgang, and my three sons, of whom, Karl, 19 years old, was in the first term of his medical studies, while Otto, 17 years old, and Ernst, 15 years old, were still at school. My husband was not only a doctor, but had a wide general culture such as is perhaps rarely found in a specialist. He was sensitive and unworldly by nature and was inspired by a lofty idealism in his attitude towards his profession. Although an unselfish and devoted husband and father he always refused to make more from the exercise of his medical calling than was required for what he considered to be our needs. He refused on principle, since the idea of making capital out of the sickness and sufferings of others was repugnant to his strongly developed feelings of humanity. Liesbeth was only 18 years of age when she married Lieutenant Rudi Stark, and I had to exert all my influence to overcome my husband's objections to her marriage with an officer. My husband was always a convinced pacifist, and in his eyes an officer—and indeed the whole army—was an utterly superfluous and barbarous public institution. He became reconciled to this marriage when he saw that Liesbeth was really happy and contented, and that our son-in-law, after four years of wedded life, still did his utmost to be a good husband to Liesbeth and a good father to his boy. My husband was a passionate lover of music and himself a fine pianist. Liesbeth, Karl, Otto and Ernst were also very musical, and my husband had trained them to form an excellent string quartette. Karl played the viola, Liesbeth the first violin, Otto the second violin, and Ernst, the youngest and most gifted of all, the cello. The first breach in our musical and family harmony was caused by

the marriage of my daughter Liesbeth, and we were overjoyed when three months later Rudi was sent to the Military College and, in consequence, Liesbeth returned to Vienna and was once more available as our first violin. This state of things did not continue for long, however, for Liesbeth was expecting a child, and after the birth of little Wolfgang she was very weak for some time and had to be spared all unnecessary exertion. In April, 1914, Vienna was visited by a very severe epidemic of influenza, and my husband was terribly overworked both at the hospital and in his private practice. Finally he contracted the disease himself, and when he was out of danger, I myself was obliged to take to my bed with a severe attack of bronchitis. Then it was that my husband's elder sister, Aunt Bertha, came to live with us, in order to manage the house and nurse my husband and myself back to health. Aunt Bertha, despite her sixty years, was active and alert. She belonged to the category of aunts who are beloved by all, because they are always ready with unselfish help and always good-tempered. She had a deep sympathy with the weaknesses of her fellow-men, but was mercilessly strict towards herself, and her sweet, sunny nature was the expression of an inward poise such as I have seldom found in anyone else.

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It was May 10th and my birthday. The evening was mild and very still. I leant against the railings of the large wooden balcony, and the strains of Mozart's string quartette in C sharp were wafted towards me through the open doors. As I listened to my children's four instruments blending in Mozart's gracious harmonies I was filled with an emotion such as I had never before experienced. Now I know that this emotion was born of a presentiment, something in me that hastened on ahead of me and told me that this evening of chamber music was the last, that this peaceful family festival was also, though without our knowledge, a festival of farewell—of farewell to a quiet and unassuming life, but a life that was free from material cares and that would one day seem to one tortured by destiny like some blissful dream of tranquil content. I flung myself down on the basket chair and tried in vain to keep back my streaming tears. The notes of the Finale died away, and Ernst, our 'cellist, came out on to the balcony. He saw that I was wiping away my tears and hurried to my side: "Mother, darling, what's the matter? You're crying!" His voice betrayed such unconcealed amazement and alarm that I quickly recovered my composure. Hush, Erni, don't give me away and don't upset all my pedagogic theories." "I know, Mother," and he quoted the rebuke I had so often addressed to the children: "Only babies and hysterical old women cry in public. Tears are too precious and sacred to be seen by any but the two eyes that shed them! And you're crying, Mother!" My sentimental mood had now quite disappeared. I had regained my self-control and could smile again. "Yes, Erni. But you must not rank me with the babies and hysterical women. You know that I despise tears seen by others. And you were not meant to see mine, you rascal." And I laughed and slapped his cheek. "But what was the matter?" he insisted. "How can I explain it to you, my child? Papa's recovery, Mozart's quartette in C sharp, the spring and I really don't know myself. But give me your hand and promise that no one else shall know our tear-stained secret." I held out my hand and he grasped it, but I saw his eyes rest wonderingly on my face several times that evening. We entered the music room. My husband was seated in his comfortable armchair, enveloped in rugs, and was criticising the children's playing. "Children," I exclaimed as I entered, "you played wonderfully to-day! You all gave your best!" "Come, come!" protested my husband. "There was

a good deal that could have been improved. Where is Ernst?" "Here, Papa," Ernst called, and my husband beckoned him to his side. "Come here! We all know that you are the greatest artist of us all." (Where music was concerned, my husband was always rather more severe with Ernst than with the other children. Ernst had an undoubted talent for music. He was an artist through and through, and by reason of this he often seemed unbalanced in comparison with his brothers and sister.) "Yes," repeated my husband, a little ironically. "We all know that you are the greatest artist of us all, but for that very reason you ought not to go your own way in a quartette. In the second movement your instrument was as self-assertive as if you had been playing a solo." "Forgive me, Papa," said Ernst. "But that passage is so heavenly." And he went to the piano and played his 'cello part from ear with an improvised piano accompaniment. My husband sighed and looked at me. "He will soon outstrip us all. He is not meant for an ensemble player." "Let us thank God that he is an artist," I said.

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On May 18th my husband went back to his hospital for the first time, but felt so listless and indisposed for work that he yielded to the persuasion of his assistant, Dr. Hoffmann, and told us that he was going to take his summer holiday this year from May 30th to July 30th. We were very delighted at this decision, and decided to go to the Millstättersee for June and the first half of July and then to move to the Molvenosee near Trient. In his capacity as physician, my husband had already several times been summoned to attend the heir to the throne. I, too, had had opportunity to see and speak to the "Este," as he was popularly nicknamed, or Archduke Franz, as he himself liked to be called. The Archduke was very much beloved in our family, although Rudi and a good many military circles could not endure him. The Archduke was about to set out with his family for Schloss Konopischt in Bohemia, and he wanted to see my husband before leaving. At the same time I was invited to an audience of his consort, the Duchess of Hohenberg. It was, so we all imagined, to be a farewell visit before the summer. When the Archduke, after his talk with my husband, came into the Duchess's salon, to wish me a happy summer, he also mentioned his official journey to Serajevo and said that he wished he could have remained quietly at Konopischt instead of going to Bosnia. I mention this particularly, because, after the tragedy at Serajevo, I was frequently obliged to contradict assertions that the Archduke had specially insisted on this fatal journey to Serajevo. After Aunt Bertha had undertaken to look after our three sons, my husband, Liesbeth, little Wolfgang and I set out for Millstatt-am-See, where we had engaged rooms at an hotel.

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THE MURDER AT SERAJEVO.

On June 29th, the festival of Saints Peter and Paul, and Liesbeth's birthday, I got up earlier than usual to decorate the breakfast table with flowers and to set in their places the little gifts from myself and my husband. Suddenly I saw telegraph boy approaching our hotel. "Ah," I thought, "a birthday telegram from Rudi," and I went to meet the messenger, in order that Liesbeth and my husband might not be awakened by his knock. "An urgent royal telegram," said the messenger. This did not alarm me in the least, for royal telegrams were always urgent, even if they only contained the most trivial messages. As I always opened my husband's telegrams in order to see if they required his immediate attention, I tore open the envelope and read:

"Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Consort Duchess of Hohenberg shot at Serajevo. Office of the Controller of the Royal Household." I read it again and could not grasp what it meant. I could only think that the word "erschossen" (shot) must be a mistake for something else; the telegram must be mutilated ; but I decided to wake my husband. I stepped quietly into the bedroom and, opening the shutters, I called my husband's name. "It is nothing," I said soothingly, as he woke with a start. "Only a mutilated royal telegram." My husband took the telegram out of my hand and read it, and I saw him turn pale. "Victor, you don't believe it? . . . It isn't possible . . .?" I exclaimed. Raising himself with a jerk he said in a quite altered voice: "It is possible. It is true . . . terribly true!" Half an hour later the whole of Millstatt was in an uproar. There was only one subject of conversation: "The Archduke, the Duchess." Many of the summer guests left. My husband was besieged with questions. Several times I heard him say: "He died like a soldier at the place where his supreme War Lord, the Emperor, set him." And six weeks later he added: "He was the first soldier on our casualty list." In reply to a telegram from my husband to the Controller of the Royal Household, he was informed that the murdered pair would be embalmed at Serajevo and that his presence there was not necessary. A long letter from Rudi told us all the details of the position in Vienna, and we learnt that all the officers had their leave cancelled, so that Rudi was obliged for the time being to give up his plan of visiting us in Millstatt.

JULY, 1914

STORM-CLOUDS

After the murder of the Archduke and his consort had been excitedly discussed for a few days and the young Archduke Karl Franz Josef had been obliged as heir to the throne to fill the gap so suddenly opened, the summer guests began once more to engage in their holiday pursuits. On July 3rd my three sons arrived. They had had an opportunity of discussing the situation with their brother-in-law in Vienna and were filled with thoughts of revenge against Serbia. Karl and Otto in particular were inflamed with chauvinistic sentiments. My husband tried to temper this thirst for vengeance as far as he was able, but the most he achieved was that the subject was not discussed in his presence, for "Papa is against war on principle, so it's no use talking to him." Ernst rarely took part in these heated debates between his brothers. He thought the outrage in Serajevo abominable, but inwardly he shared Papa's opinion that it did not justify provoking a war, which might perhaps entail the sacrifice of thousands of lives. I myself (as I now have to admit to my shame) at that time took the side rather of my two older sons. I was impulsive and energetic by nature, and it seemed to me that any forbearance in connection with the Serbian dispute was extremely uncalled for. Liesbeth adopted a passive attitude towards the whole situation, but inwardly shared the views of her husband, the professional soldier. After the arrival of my sons we only remained another eight days in Millstatt, for the weather had changed for the worse; so we left for Molveno, hoping to find blue skies again.

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On July 28th, a big industrialist who was staying in our hotel received news that war had been declared against Serbia. At once the heated debates for and against war were silenced. Everyone thought only for himself or herself and how to safeguard his or her interests. Everyone hastily reflected what was the best course to take, and almost all came to the same

conclusion—to leave immediately. The hotel-keeper wrung his hands; his season was ruined. Luggage was hurriedly packed; the telephone and telegraph offices were besieged, and every available vehicle was hired, for regular train service was suspended owing to the transport of troops, and the only thing left to do was to drive to the station of St. Michele, a three hours' journey, on the chance of getting a passenger train there. Those who had sufficient money drove in their own motors or hired cars from Bozen or Trient. The people of Molveno were already reaping a profit from the state of war. Rustic mule carts and donkey carts were let out at fantastic prices. We too, after a great deal of trouble and expense, secured one of these carts. Our hotel-keeper had received news that a train would leave for Vienna on the 29th about noon, so we started at 6 o'clock in the morning, and, as our hack broke all records in respect both of obstinacy and slowness, we only arrived at the station just before the train was due to start. My sons had run on in front and managed to secure three seats, which we reached with difficulty, for the carriages were jammed to overflowing. The people were all in the highest spirits, and when a military train decorated with fir branches and crammed with soldiers pulled into the station, it was greeted with rousing cheers and shouts of "Down with Serbia." My husband pointed to the noisy, yelling crowd. "There you have it!" he said. "War psychosis!" And he leant back his head against the cushion and closed his eyes. Liesbeth and I exchanged smiling glances. At that time I did not realise that his brain had remained cool and clear in contrast to all those who were shouting and bawling around us, obsessed by feverish enthusiasm for war. During the whole journey Liesbeth was worrying whether Rudi might not have had to leave before her return, and she was overjoyed when she found him waiting to welcome her and Wolfi on the platform. This greeting was, however, also a farewell, for that same evening he had to leave with his headquarters staff for Bosnia. Then followed the declarations of war, one after the other, until we found ourselves allied with Germany, Bulgaria and Turkey in a war' against the whole world. The five men of my immediate family—my husband, my son-in-law, Rudi and my three sons—were in the direct service of the war-fury. Liesbeth and I, like all the women of the Hinterland who were not engaged in actual war-work, waged a desperate struggle for the alleviation of the terrible wartime distress around us. And now I shall skip over those interminable war years with their inhumanly destructive conflicts of nation against nation. I shall skip over the whole period from August 1st, 1914 to October 25th, 1918. At the latter date our family consisted only of Karl, Erni, Liesbeth, Rudi and little five-year old Wolfi. My husband, after he had overworked himself unsparingly for three years and contracted acute gastric trouble owing to insufficient nourishment, died of heart failure. Otto, after completing his military training, volunteered for active service in the year 1915. His regiment was engaged in an attack on the Russian front, and after it his name appeared in the casualty lists as "missing." The hope which we and others cherished that he was alive and would some day be restored to us dwindled month by month. He remained" missing." As my son Karl was a medical student, he was assigned to an ambulance corps, and was twice decorated for his heroism in rescuing wounded under fire. A head wound, though it healed satisfactorily, rendered him for a time unfit for active service. While he was in hospital at Vienna, he became engaged to a young girl, the daughter of a colonel, who was acting as a voluntary nurse. She was a gentle, devoted creature and had the most salutary influence on Karl's impetuous disposition. Karl's character had in fact undergone a marked change since his head injury. He was often violent and impatient for no reason and unsparing in his criticism of those placed over him; moreover, he

engaged in political discussions in the course of which he expressed views that filled me with uneasiness and alarm. Erni, who only entered the army in 1917, was, through Rudi's influence, assigned to an artillery regiment. The danger in the artillery positions was certainly less, and I was infinitely grateful to Rudi. Erni was up to now unwounded and had developed remarkably well and gained strength during his period of active service. Although I am his mother, I have no hesitation in saying that he was a very beautiful boy. His expressive dark blue eyes gave to his face an extraordinarily sweet and sunny expression. Up to the time when he left for the Front, he had continued his musical studies with great enthusiasm and had every prospect of a brilliant future. "He will one day be a very great musician," one of his teachers assured me. "See that he comes out of the War with a whole skin!" Yes, if I had the power! Up to now he was unwounded, God be thanked! My son-in-law, Rudi, who had meanwhile been promoted to the rank of major, had recently been awarded the order of the Iron Crown for bravery. A clean shot through his right arm had healed up without any evil consequences, and even now (October, 1918) his optimism was still unimpaired. Although the Central Powers, as a result of the effectiveness of the blockade, were suffering every imaginable want, and the food and equipment of the armies was becoming steadily worse, Rudi, who was at the Italian Front, was convinced that in another month the Italians would be forced to capitulate. My daughter Liesbeth, who had come to live with me since the death of my husband, in order to simplify the food question, which was already presenting serious problems in every household, had been ailing recently. The doctor diagnosed the trouble as pulmonary catarrh. As she was in her third month of pregnancy, I was seriously worried about her. Wolfi was pale and delicate, but always lively and cheerful and often a welcome source of gaiety in our home. He was a devoted friend and playmate of Aunt Bertha, who could invariably find her way to any child's heart. My own health at this time was still satisfactory. My stomach could even tolerate the maize bread which many found uneatable, and my loss of weight was not alarming. At this time I did not guess what terrible times were awaiting us all and that for the housewives in the Hinterland war was really only just beginning. From now on I shall let my Diary speak for me:

OCTOBER 25TH, 1918

ALARMING NEWS FROM THE FRONT. FOOD SITUATION INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT

At last a letter from Karl, delivered to us by one of his comrades on the journey to the Western Front. This man told me that Karl had been transferred to the trenches as the result of a dispute with his superior officer. He also brought a pamphlet, which has been dropped in large quantities over our positions by enemy aeroplanes. The Entente are trying to incite our troops to rebellion. They promise a favourable peace if our soldiers will go home. Does the Entente need yet more weapons with which to fight against us? Karl's letter breathes the deepest depression. He is stationed near Sette Comuni. They are standing up to their knees in water. He asks for shoes, as his own have rotted through being incessantly damp. "The life here is unworthy of any human being. I ask myself again and again how the motley collection of older men and young boys in these front positions endure this life. Insufficient food, tattered shoes and uniforms. No possibility of keeping one's self clean. Are our human sensibilities already utterly stupefied?" Poor Karl. If I had any say in the matter, I should be in favour of concluding peace immediately. Wilson, with his Fourteen Points, offered us a good, honourable peace. Why didn't we grasp at it? In a postscript Karl writes: "I feel convinced that we can't go on like

this. The War will end soon, one way or another. See that you get in food supplies, for Vienna will be eaten out of house and home by the soldiers when they come back. I too suffer from chronic hunger." I talked it over with Liesbeth. She thinks that Karl's letter is exaggerated. But Liesbeth's catarrh is worse, and Wolfi is begging for milk; it is now a week since we had the ¼-pint of milk due to us on our ration cards. I resolve to "hamster" (hoard food). During my husband's lifetime, I dared not do this. When he was seriously ill, I did it without his knowledge. I did not feel that I was becoming demoralised —on the contrary, I might almost say: Have I not the right to guard and protect the life of my family? For all its rigorous organisation, the State could not feed its citizens, and it cannot do so to-day. For a long time we have only been getting a part of the food due to us on our ration cards. The doctors have discovered that, even if we got the whole of our ration, this would only be sufficient to meet one-fourth of the food requirements of an adult person weighing 11 stone. Aunt Bertha, out of an excessive and misguided conscientiousness, has insisted on living exclusively on the official food rations; in consequence she is now ill with softening of the bones—a striking proof that to obey the food laws is equivalent to suicide. Karl's letter proved to me that, in spite of our privations in the Hinterland, we are no longer in a position to feed our armies. If the War is to end soon, as Karl declares and as I pray to God it may, I shall have to provide for another three hungry stomachs in addition to Wolfi and his ailing mother. Although I had now and then had recourse to one of the much abused "Schleichhändler" (smugglers) in order to procure the necessary foodstuffs for our household, such as milk, eggs, butter or fat, I was far from having accumulated any surplus stores. The foodstuffs distributed by the Government were very dear, but the prices charged by the Schleichhändler were often five or six times as high. Below are the official prices of some of the principal rationed foodstuffs, together with the prices of the same articles in the year 1914, before the War: The prices are, unless otherwise stated, the official wholesale prices per 100 kilogrammes. (about 2 cwt.) To get the retail prices 20 to 25 per cent. should be added in each case.

PP - Peace Price, 1914

WP - War Price, 1918.

1 Austrian (pre-war) Krone = 100 Heller = 10d.

Wheat – PP 22k, WP 62k

Rye – PP 19k50h, WP 65k

Oats – PP 19k, WP 60k

Barley – PP 16k84h, WP 60k

Cooking peas – PP 28k74h, WP 120k

Lentils – PP 43k88h, WP 150k

Beans – PP 30k44h, WP 100k

Potatoes – PP 6k89h, WP 20k

Sugar beet – PP 2k30h, WP 12k

Cabbage – PP 4k, WP 56k

Raw sugar – PP 26k67h, WP 112k

Refined sugar – PP 34k67h, WP 186k

Molasses – PP 6k, WP 40k
Cattle – PP 93k, WP 380k
Beef, per kilogramme – PP 1k80h, WP20k
Lard, per 100 kg. – PP 163k40h, WP 1140k
Eggs, each – PP 9h, WP 50h
Butter, fat – PP 2k50h, WP 27k

It will be seen from this table that the wholesale prices of the most important foodstuffs had tripled or quadrupled during the four war years. At the present time these foodstuffs are distributed by the Food Control authorities according to ration cards, but so irregularly and in such small quantities that, in order not to starve, one is forced to have recourse to the flourishing Schleichhändler, whose extortionate charges are a good two hundred or three hundred per cent above the official prices, and are increased in proportion to the increased necessity of the buyer. So I decided to hamster. The little fortune which I had inherited from my father brings me in now, with cautious investment, about 5,000 kronen (about £200) per annum. When my husband was still alive and our dear Austria was undisturbed by war, I used this money for the purpose of improving my children's education and for little excursions and summer holidays. The idea that I could be of some pecuniary assistance to my husband had always afforded me immense satisfaction. Since my husband's death, or rather, perhaps, since the outbreak of this unhappy war, intellectual interests have been forced into the background. Already in the year 1914 we housewives began to suffer from measures of economy, which were not improved when the military authorities took over the control of supplies. We submitted uncomplainingly, because we received news of victories both on the Western and the Eastern Fronts and of hundreds of thousands of prisoners. And each of these victories must be bringing blessed peace nearer to us. Now, at the end of the fourth year of war, when the Central Powers and their whole civilian population are like a besieged fortress cut off from all external supplies and without any hope of breaking through the hunger blockade, I am no longer disposed to sacrifice any more members of my family to the Moloch of war.

OCTOBER 26TH, 1918

I INFRINGE THE FOOD LAWS BY A SUCCESSFUL "HAMSTERING" EXPEDITION

Some farmers living on the outskirts of Vienna, whose families have been professionally attended by my husband, had already during my husband's lifetime wanted to prove their affection and gratitude by little presents of foodstuffs. My husband had flatly refused these tokens of appreciation. I now resolved to visit these people. Liesbeth was coughing a great deal, and in her condition nourishing food was a vital necessity. I drew from my bank 20,000 kronen (about £833) in cash. The bank clerk, who had attended to me and advised me for years, recommended me to convert my money into Swiss francs. When I objected that private dealings in foreign currencies were not allowed, he whispered to me that he would manage it for me if I would authorise him to do so. The transaction must, of course, be effected secretly, since it was forbidden by law. I had already resolved that day to infringe one law by the illicit purchase of supplies, but now I nervously rejected my adviser's offer. "You will regret it, gnädige Frau. Only Switzerland and Holland will keep their currencies stable." "No, no, I prefer not; financial transactions are beyond me." To-day I travelled outside the boundaries of Vienna

for the first time after a long interval. On the trams there were only women conductors, who did their work quietly and efficiently. I took a train on the Südbahn which had a connection with a train to Laxenburg. Apart from a few men on leave, my companions were mostly women, armed with rucksacks or handbags. Hamstering is forbidden, but after all it is only the primitive instinct of self-preservation. The second-class carriage in which I was seated had a strangely dilapidated appearance. The leather covers had great holes where pieces had obviously been hurriedly cut off or torn off. The leather straps for letting down the windows were also missing. Leather has become a rarity for civilians and inhabitants of the Hinterland. New shoes are practically unobtainable. One sees fantastic substitutes for shoes, with wooden soles and any sort of upper. People seize upon leather, none the less, wherever they can find it. Our carriage had no window panes; one side of the openings was nailed up with boards. Only women were working in the fields, except for a boy or an old man here and there and sometimes a few Russian prisoners of war. A man home on leave was leading the conversation in our compartment. At the Front, he said, things were even worse than in the Hinterland. No one had enough to eat there. The Hungarians were to blame for it all; they had abundance of everything and fattened their pigs with maize, but they refused to give anything to us.... "No, no," said a woman, who was carrying two empty rucksacks, "It's the Food Controllers who are to blame for everything and the Schleichhändler, who are all becoming millionaires. But if there were no Food Controllers, there would be no Schleichhändler . . ." At Laxenburg the scene was already more animated. Although Emperor Karl and his family had transferred the Court from Laxenburg to the military headquarters at Baden, a few officers of the Royal Household had remained behind and a regiment of Hungarian artillery was quartered there. In order to reach my former acquaintances I had to cross the vast Laxenburg Park, famous for its magnificent stretches of forest and meadow land. The long spell of fine weather had left the trees in leaf, and they burnt and glowed with every shade of autumn gold. The tender mauve of the meadow saffron contrasted with the now faded green of the wide stretches of pasture land which were interspersed with groups of magnificent trees planted centuries ago and disposed in such a way as to delight the eye with the most enchanting vistas. A hot autumn sun was shining in a deep blue sky. I seated myself in the wide shade of a gnarled and stately oak, revelling in a contact with Nature which I had so long been denied. All around me was profound stillness and peace. I abandoned myself to this impression, which no sensitive dweller in a great city can escape when he is transplanted from his surroundings into the great tranquillity of Nature. I sat quite still, leaning against the huge oak-stem, my eyelids half closed. Peace was above me in the high tree tops and above the tree tops in the sunlit air. Peace lay before me on the pale green expanses of meadow and around me in the dark green of the bushes. And peace invaded my heart. The hoarse cry of a nutcracker as it flew past ended my dream of peace. There stood war again, in all its might and brutality, and I stood in its shadow, miserable and frightened. Yet how welcome was this respite, even though it only lasted a few minutes. My watch pointed to eleven. I should have to hurry. At noon I found the farmer's wife at home. She was very kind and friendly, though she herself has plenty of troubles. Her husband has for weeks been lying wounded in a hospital at the Front. Her eldest child is ten years old, there are three younger ones, and another is on the way. She cannot cope with the work, the fields are untilled. There are no farm labourers, and the girls are all running off to the munition factories. "If only my husband were at home." She sympathised with my troubles and pitied me, for, after all, she has

more to eat than I have. She packed bread, flour, beans, bacon and honey into my hand-basket, as much as I could carry. The prices which she charged me were moderate. She advised me not to go through the town, but to take the path across the fields to the station in order to avoid the police. "They are very down on the hamsterers." Although I kept on repeating to myself all the way to the station that there was no harm in what I was doing, I stumbled anxiously and guiltily to the station across turnip fields and ploughed land. Unmolested, but exhausted by the weight of my load and the fear of being discovered, I reached home. The food I have secured to-day at the cost of a fairly large amount of money and a still larger amount of nervous strain has a peace value of not quite 10 kronen!

OCTOBER 27TH, 1918

ERNI WOUNDED

To-day a letter arrived signed by Erni but written in an unfamiliar hand. Erni is lying wounded at Innsbruck. His life is in no danger. An injury to the eyes, which they hope is not serious. As soon as he is fit to be moved he will come to Vienna. "An injury to the eyes, which they hope is not serious." I felt a vague, terrible anxiety—for Erni's big, blue, childlike eyes. Liesbeth soothed me. We persuaded ourselves that we ought to be glad and grateful when a slight wound brought our men into a hospital and so for the time being into safety. "How glad I was," said Liesbeth, "when Rudi came to Vienna with his arm wound. And now we shall soon have Erni here and be able to nurse and spoil him." A Surgeon-Major-General, who is a friend of ours, has promised me to expedite Erni's transference to Vienna, so I have given up for the time being my plan of going to Innsbruck.

NOVEMBER 1ST, 1918

WRETCHED MEALS. EXTRA EDITION. ERNI COMES BACK.

Liesbeth, Wolfi and I were seated at our wartime breakfast table. From a "hamstered" tin of milk I was spooning out the scanty rations for Liesbeth and Wolfi into bowls filled with hot water. After the spoon had been used, it was carefully scraped, so that not a drop of milk should be lost. Wolfi was then allowed to lick the spoon, which he did with great thoroughness and obvious enjoyment. Fortunately the milk was sweetened. For months we have been getting only saccharine on our ration-cards, or very small portions of sticky, yellow, unpalatable raw sugar. The rations, if one gets them at all, are so small that it is impossible to meet one's sugar requirements with them for a week, allowing one cup of tea a day. Tea and coffee I have in fact long since banished from our menu as luxurious stimulants without any nutritive value. Strangely enough, it was our old cook, now my only remaining help with the housework and otherwise not at all given to complaining, who objected most strongly to this rule. She is a Viennese, and even in prosperous times many Viennese lived mainly on coffee and milk with the famous and excellent Viennese bread and rolls. Both now belong to history, and Wolfi only knows Kipfel (small loaves) and Semmelt (white rolls) from the enthusiastic descriptions of Kathi, who keeps on sighing: "If I could only have my coffee and my roll again!" The portion of the loaf which we draw on our ration cards I divide up very carefully by means of scratches on the crust. I use a very sharp knife for cutting the loaf, for any crumbling would mean waste. The bread is pale yellow and moist as long as it is fresh. Though it is kept in the bread pan, it gets dry very quickly. When it is bitten, it grates against the teeth as though it contained sand. It is

made of a mixture of maize flour, horse-chestnut flour and a little rye. Liesbeth can hardly digest it, and I have difficulty in persuading her to eat a part of her ration. A so-called plum jam is supposed to make the bread more palatable. It looks like cart grease and has an indefinable but, at any rate, a sweetish taste. It is my unpleasant duty as housewife to find all these dubious foodstuffs excellent and tasty in order not to rob my three table companions of their appetite, which at any rate in Wolfi's case is still approximately normal. He tolerates the bad and insufficient fare comparatively well, whereas we adults frequently suffer from digestive troubles which take away all our appetite. Wolfi is not exactly robust, which is not surprising in view of the lack of nourishing food, but he has kept his sunburn from the summer, although we never left the city. Our large south-east terrace has overlooking the park of the Boys' School has proved a real boon. Wolfi can play all sorts of games there, and in the fine weather Liesbeth was able to sit out on it and work at the sewing which is always accumulating in a household. And now that the weather has turned raw and cool Liesbeth can save herself the fatigue of a walk with Wolfi, for the little fellow is warmly wrapped up and sent on to the terrace, where he rides round on his little bicycle or busies himself with his bricks. Through being always with grown-up people Wolfi is rather precocious. He has an extraordinarily quick understanding and, in spite of his high spirits, is a gentle, patient child.

"EXTRA EDITION! ! "

Our quiet street lies apart from any main thoroughfare, so that we hear none of the tumult of the city, not even the shout "Extra Edition!" to which the population have grown accustomed during the last four years. But our house-porter, who himself has two sons at the Front and, therefore, takes a great interest in the war news, supplies us with all the war bulletins: that is to say, he reads the newspapers first and I pay for them when he brings them to us. He himself is exempted from military service on account of his gout. To-day Kathi opened the door to him. The old man was obviously excited. "Gnä Frau, now we're done for, now the game's up. That rascal Karolyi has called back the Hungarian regiments from the Front and now we're left there . . ." I let the old man go on talking while Liesbeth and I read the latest bulletins: "Count Karolyi was yesterday appointed Prime Minister by the Emperor. Count Karolyi has recalled the Hungarian regiments from the Italian Front. Count Tisza has been shot by two soldiers." A second Extra Edition brought the war bulletin: "On the Italian Mountain Front our troops will systematically carry out the proposed measures of evacuation and occupy the same positions as at the beginning of the Italian campaign. In the Venetian plain the retreat across the Tagliamento is in progress. The total evacuation of Serbian territory is about to be effected." Liesbeth and I were plunged in consternation. The Hungarian regiments recalled! What was Karolyi thinking of and why had he of all people been appointed Prime Minister, when everyone knew that he was an ambitious revolutionary? What was going to happen? We had no soldiers to spare. How could we replace the Hungarian regiments? We could not replace them; that the bulletin made quite clear. Retreat all along the Italian and Serbian Front. We tried to reassure and comfort each other, but were both filled with secret apprehension. "There is no need to worry about Rudi. He is with the headquarters staff," I said. "But you know, Mother, Rudi wrote in his last letter that he was going to volunteer for service at the Front because they were so short of officers. Oh, Mother, how terrible!" said Liesbeth, and she began to cry quietly. "What! You, a soldier's wife and my daughter, crying? For shame!" Liesbeth tried hard to smile. "We

are not all as brave as you, Mother." I stroked her fair head. "Am I brave?" I thought to myself. "At night I shed hot tears and give vent to all the grief which has been weighing on my soul during the day beneath a mask of indifference. And can one call women cowardly if they break down under the prolonged anxiety for their dear husbands?" Wolfi, who saw his mother crying, pressed himself against her in mute affection. Then he seized her hand and, as if to distract her thoughts, he began his childish game, addressing each of her fingers in turn: "This is the thumb which shakes the plums, this gathers them up, this carries them home . . . and this little rascal swallows them all." The telephone bell rang. Edith, Karl's fiancée, had read the alarming news, and was very anxious, for she knew that Karl was in the trenches. I determined to go to the War Ministry, where a cousin of my late husband, a lieutenant-general, has a responsible position. I found him in a very grave mood. He, too, criticised Karolyi bitterly. He showed me an Italian General Staff bulletin: "Irresistible advance of our victorious troops. The Czechoslovakian troops are taking part in the attack." The lieutenant-general told me that the Commander-in-Chief, realising that in view of the withdrawal of the Hungarian regiments and the increasing difficulties of supplying and equipping the armies it would be impossible to hold the Italian Front, had requested the Italian military leaders to open negotiations for an armistice. "My God, then they will come back!" I said joyfully. The lieutenant-general quenched my delight by saying: "That is far from certain. The Italians answered our request for armistice negotiations by violent attacks, supported by the English and Americans, which cost us a large number of dead and wounded." "That is cruel and barbarous and also utterly incomprehensible," I said. "Not so incomprehensible as you imagine. I look upon it as a sign that our enemies mean to impose on us a very severe armistice terms," declared the lieutenant-general. "But they must be in accordance with Wilson's Fourteen Points. We have been promised that." "Nonsense! Wilson is a civilian and will have to leave the peace terms to the soldiers." I hurried home. In the streets groups of people were standing, exchanging views concerning the latest bulletins. I reflected what I should say to Liesbeth, in order not to alarm her too greatly. The old house-porter was standing outside our front door. It almost looked as though he were waiting for me. He came a few steps to meet me. "Gnä Frau, a great surprise! The young gentleman has come home." "Which?" I seized his arm with a sense of mingled joy and alarm. "Why, Herr Erni!" I rushed up the stairs as fast as my feet would carry me, until I was completely out of breath. I rang the bell. Kathi opened the door and tried to tell me the news. I thrust her on one side. On the way to Erni's room I heard the notes of the piano. I stood still and listened. I heard Erni's favourite melody from Mozart's C sharp string quartette. On the tips of my toes I stepped to the door of the sitting-room and opened it quietly. Liesbeth was standing at the end of the piano, Wolfi was leaning against her, holding her arm. She put her finger to her lips. Erni, with a black bandage over both eyes, was seated at the piano. He looked very pale. His face was turned upwards, and an ecstatic smile played over his soft, childish lips. He passed from the Mozart to a melody that was strange to me, but its wonderful, melancholy harmonies seemed to enrapture him. I had stepped up to him from behind very quietly, but he was conscious of my approach. Without interrupting his playing, he said to me, so softly that I had to bend down to catch the words: "Mother, that is a memory of the 10th of May, 1914, when you could not help crying on the balcony. Out at the Front these notes were sounding in my head all the time." I smoothed one of the fair, wavy locks of hair that had been disarranged by the eye-bandage. He stopped playing and clutched his head with a low sigh. "It still hurts!" He stood up and felt for my hands.

"But the Professor in Innsbruck told me that the pains would soon stop altogether and that everything would be all right." "Yes, my boy," I said. "Everything is already almost all right, because you are here," and, with a side-glance at Liesbeth: "Now, if only Rudi and Karl would come too, everything would really be all right. But come, tell me everything. I know nothing yet. When and how were you wounded?" "It was just a fortnight ago to-day, Mother. It really there's very little to tell. What has happened to me is only what has been happening or might have been happening for years to others." And he told me how he and his men were repelling an aeroplane attack on his gun position when a bomb dropped from an aeroplane exploded near them and killed seven of his men, while he himself was wounded in the left eye by a small splinter. As they were in an advanced and very inaccessible mountain position, he could not get to the ambulance until the next day. They sent him with the next batch of wounded to Innsbruck, where the Professor operated on him at once, but said that it would be a long time before he could use his eyes again, for the wounded eye had infected the sound one. "You will have to be patient with me, Mother, until it is cured," he added. "And this thing," he caught hold of the large silver medal for valour attached to his field-grey tunic, "they hung on to me afterwards. But I would rather have my sight, for it is terrible to be blind." "You must have patience, my boy. To-morrow we will go to Professor X. at the Eye Clinic. You know what a high opinion your father had of him. If he takes you in hand, you will soon get back the use of your eyes."

NOVEMBER 5TH, 1918

ERNI'S EYES. KARL COMES BACK

Events crowd one upon another, but, alas! not happy events. Nothing but fresh trouble and anxiety on all hands. Yesterday I took Erni to Professor X. at the Eye Clinic. While Erni was having a new bandage put on his eyes the Professor told me that he had practically no hope of saving his sight. The optic nerve was injured. Possibly an operation' might be tried later, and so on. "But don't say anything about this to the patient; it is important to accustom one's self gradually to such a great misfortune." I must have turned pale when he told me this, for he pressed me gently on to a chair and told one of the nurses to give me a glass of water. I could not speak a word, but I was filled with utter despair. "Dear Frau Martha, don't lose heart. I know that you are an energetic, devoted and unselfish mother. I repeat that later on it may be worth while to try an operation." "What shall I say to him?" "That the cure will take some weeks, at the end of which time you are to come and see me again. Do not rob him of all hope." I was choked with rising tears, I stepped into the adjacent waiting room in order that my voice might not betray my distress to Erni. The long room was filled to overflowing. The benches round the walls were crowded with patients waiting to be attended to, and many had to stand because they could not find a vacant seat. Most of them had bandages over their eyes or dark glasses or eye-shades. Nearly all were accompanied by friends or relations, because they were helpless and their steps had to be guided. I closed the door behind me and leant against it. The thought of Erni's blindness made my knees tremble and my heart throb. A young, poorly dressed woman seated near me on the end of the bench was chattering with apparent gaiety and unconcern to a soldier who looked hardly more than a boy. She rose from her seat and came up to me: "You're not feeling well. Do sit down." And she pointed to her place. When I thanked her, she went on with the ingenuous and persistent curiosity peculiar to women of the

lower classes of society: "Have you got some one there, with the Professor? Who is it? Your husband or brother?" "My son," I answered. "Well, and is it bad?" "Blind." And suddenly I felt a longing to flee from all this misery and horror into insensibility and oblivion. My head was in a whirl. The woman seized my arm and laid her finger on her lips. She made a movement with her head towards the young soldier, who was seated on the bench next to us, staring with sightless eyes into vacancy. "Blind too. My husband. But he thinks he is going to see again and so he can bear it. And believe me, I am very happy to have him back. I was crazy with fear that my Poldi would be shot dead like all his brothers. I shall help him to bear it. He's just got to get used to it, that's all" The woman spoke in a whisper. Then the blind man called out: "Mariedl, where are you hiding?" She went up to him quickly and I heard her say softly: "It's the son of a grand lady in there. He's worse off than you. Shot quite blind." "This beastly war," said the man, and a scornful smile played over his lips. "But there's one good thing about it. Bullets and shrapnel treat everyone alike, rich and poor." With a superhuman effort I roused myself. "I shall help him . . . he's just got to get used to it." The woman's words echoed in my ears. The nurse opened the door leading into the consulting room. I entered. Erni was standing there expectantly. "Help him . . . he's just got to get used to it." The tempest within me had calmed. I recovered my self-control, and my invincible energy, which up to now had helped me over every difficulty once more gained the ascendancy. I went up to the Professor and, pressing his hand, I said aloud: "Thank you, Herr Professor; I am delighted to know that everything is so satisfactory." Erni heard my words and turned his face with a smile in the direction from which they came. The Professor patted me on the shoulder and nodded: "Come back in a fortnight. By that time we shall see an improvement." "In a fortnight. By that time we shall see improvement. That's what the Professor said, didn't he?" asked Erni when we left the Clinic Yes, my child, and during this fortnight we will all see for you and always tell you what is going on around you." You know, Mother darling, I really ought to be thankful that I have escaped so lightly. Just think if I had lost my hearing or my arms. Then it would have been all over with my music. I don't need eyes for playing the piano or the 'cello. And even when I compose, you or Liesbeth will sometimes write down the notes for me, won't you, Mother?" "Of course, my dear boy." "I know you will make it easy for me until I am quite well again!" "Make it easy. He must get used to it," echoed in my ears. "My God, help me to make it easy for him." Karl has come back. Owing to a slight attack of diarrhoea, he was taken to a military hospital and then by train through Trient to Vienna. Since the Hungarians have withdrawn from the field, the War is ended for our soldiers too. Karl looked very ill. He had no underlinen or socks. His uniform was dirty and in rags. "Mother, I am famished!" he said, and walking straight into the kitchen without waiting for me to bring him something he began to devour our rations of bread and jam. "Forgive me, Mother, but we have got into the habit of taking what we can find." He only greeted us very casually and did not notice until much later that Erni, who had come in to welcome him on Liesbeth's arm, was wounded. "Hullo! So it's caught you too!" and then, still hurriedly chewing and swallowing: "Well, just wait! We'll pay them out yet, the war profiteers and parasites. We've grown wiser out there in the trenches, far wiser than we were. Everything must be changed, utterly changed." I got ready the bath and clean underlinen. After his bath Karl went straight to bed, but he was too excited to sleep, although it was almost 11 o'clock at night. He telephoned to Edith, and then he made us all come to his bedside, for he wanted to tell us about himself. He told us that he had been lucky to get the attack of diarrhea, and that

the others who had to remain at the Front were all dead or taken prisoners. The Italians had gone on attacking in spite of the Armistice. For another whole day they had fired on our retreating columns in the Fellathal and had captured several divisions. That, however, was the only victory they had won. It was contemptible, but war made everyone base and contemptible. He had become so too. Karl also told us that in his section near Sette Comuni, Americans and English were fighting against us and that the Americans and English had already occupied Trieste. For the first time in the history of the world Americans and English had landed as enemies on our coast. After the proclamation of the Armistice all military discipline went to pieces. Everyone was intent only on getting home and made for home by the way that seemed to him quickest and surest. The men trampled down whatever stood in their way, even if the obstacle were their own officers. Woe to the officers who were unpopular with their men! The soldiers besieged the transport trains and plundered the stores to supply themselves with food for the journey. Karl told us that he was crowded with almost a hundred other men in a goods truck intended for forty men or ten horses. Wounded, nurses, generals, soldiers were jumbled together anyhow. Soldiers who could not get into the carriages sat on the steps, the buffers or the roofs. Many of them fell off from sheer exhaustion and were run over. The Südbahn tunnels were full of seriously wounded and dead, who had been pushed down from the roofs of the carriages. But after all what did it matter? A few hundred dead more or less among the millions of war victims... But in the next war there would be no one foolish enough to risk his life, they would see to that. . . . Karl was evidently in a nervous, over-excited state, but he went on talking, and only after I had entreated him several times did he consent to try to get to sleep. "We are all tired, Karl, and it is already past midnight..." "Do you know, Mother, how I feel here? In a clean bed, washed and fed? As if I were in heaven. . . . Oh no, there is no heaven so beautiful. ... As if I were in a beautiful dream . . . and in that dream I shall try to find sleep." We left Karl's room in order to go to bed ourselves. As I was helping Erni undress, he said: "Mother, Karl seems to me like a complete stranger. Perhaps it is only because I can't see him. But that I hope I shall be able to do again soon." Although I was nervously and physically exhausted, sleep refused to close my eyelids. For a long, long time I lay awake, agitated by the horrors of the War. I found myself marvelling that civilised human beings could live through all the brutalities which war entailed for themselves and others without going utterly to pieces. How terrible must have been the privations and sufferings of these poor men, quite apart from the constant danger to their lives. And I said to myself: "What have you to complain of? You have got back two out of your three sons . . . though one is blind and the other's mental balance obviously upset." I folded my hands and lost consciousness as I murmured "Deliver us from evil."

NOVEMBER 6TH, 1918

NO NEWS FROM RUDI. THE EMPEROR IN ECKARDSAU

A Roman poet says: "In a palace of resounding brass with a thousand doors dwells rumour. His housemates are credulity, error, malice and fear." Wild rumours are in circulation, and alas! bitter truths as well. People are afraid of the undisciplined troops who are streaming home. The men here have banded themselves into associations for self-defence against plunderers. That is to say, we must protect ourselves against the defenders of our own country, who, owing to the destructive and demoralising influence of war, have learnt not to shrink from any deed of violence.

"Vienna will be the rallying-point of the returning soldiers. In Vienna the soldiers will help themselves to what they have so long been deprived of during the War."

"The soldiers of the Guard at the imperial palace of Schönbrunn, whither Emperor Karl and his family had returned after abruptly terminating their visit to Hungary, have deserted their posts without permission. As the safety of the imperial family at Schönbrunn could no longer be guaranteed, the Emperor has moved to the castle of Eckardsau on the Danube.

"All the prisoners are said to have escaped from Möllersdorf and fled to Vienna.

"As the railway lines are blocked by trains full of returning troops, the transport of our scanty food supplies to Vienna is interrupted. Most of the provision shops are closed, and so on."

With all these rumours it was difficult for a housewife to keep a cool head. One thing was certain: I must somehow get hold of food. The Czechs and the Hungarians have completely closed their frontiers against the export of foodstuffs. In the whole of Vienna there is no milk to be had on our ration cards. I resolved to go to the farmer's wife at Laxenburg again and asked Karl to help me on this hamstering expedition. With some reluctance he agreed. In the army Karl made a friend, who fills his head with violent political notions and seems even to try to turn him against us. Karl was to have visited a soldiers' meeting with him. That was more important than hamstering. Only by Edith's influence was Karl persuaded to accompany me. When we left the house, we found the streets filled with excited crowds. There were some desperate-looking types among them. Several times we saw officers being mishandled in the streets in order to force them to take the imperial eagle from their caps. I was indignant, but Karl seemed delighted: "The imperial eagle is at the point of death. Quite a different phoenix will arise from its ashes." An elderly higher-grade officer was being jostled by some hooligans, because he refused to strip off his former distinctions. "Karl, go and help him..." "I shouldn't dream of doing such a thing. It's these great men who have grown fat on the War and looked after their own safety. I wouldn't raise a finger to help one of them." Karl's conduct appalled me. But just then the officer helped himself. He gave the most aggressive of his assailants a vigorous box on the ear, whereupon all five heroes retreated in confusion. It was clear that they were not used to encountering resistance. I had just made up my mind to go to the help of the old gentleman and I shouted to him a loud "Bravo!" And turning to Karl I said: "What right have these young hooligans to rob our officers of distinctions which it is only their duty to wear?" "Oh, Mother," said Karl, "the difference between officers and soldiers has vanished with the War, just as in future there will be no privileged social class. No emperor, no princes, no counts, no barons." "Tell me, Karl," I said, "where did you get hold of these anarchistic or nihilistic ideas? You always used to be a good, patriotic Austrian." "My ideas are neither anarchistic nor nihilistic. I am a communist." "Good heavens, Karl! You are not speaking seriously?" "Quite seriously, Mother. How is it possible to be anything else, when one sees the injustice suffered by those who are not born into the privileged classes of society?" My face must have worn an expression of horror, for Karl cast a sidelong glance at me and said laughing: "Come, come! That doesn't mean that I'm a criminal!" "But with those ideas you might easily become one, Karl, and I know, too, who has put this nonsense into your head." "Well, who? So you won't credit me with any ideas of my own." "No, I don't credit you with such ideas of your own. They come from your friend, Dr. Arenstamm, who since you came back has been visiting the house far too often for my taste. I am not an anti-Semite, but I don't like that muddle-headed fanatic." "I'll see that you don't meet him." "That won't do you any good. It would be better if you saw that you didn't

meet him, Karl." Karl's face wore a sullen expression as he said: "Arenstamm is my friend and one of the most brilliant political thinkers that I know." "And how will Edith, your fiancée, like being engaged to a communist?" "That's my business. In any case, I beg you not to speak to her about it." I was silent. I felt that any opposition on my part would only widen the breach which now separated Karl from his family. A communist! I pondered why this political concept inspired me, as a middle-class woman, with such horror. Is not communism a world-philosophy like any other, and is not every man entitled to his own opinion? I was afraid lest bourgeois prejudice engendered by the environment in which I lived should make me unjust. My mind travelled back to the great French Revolution and I tried to discover its connection with the communism of our days. I found it immediately and therewith the explanation of my instinctive loathing and horror: Communism is despotism. It is a tyranny entailing the forcible suppression of every other free expression of opinion. Political opponents and all who do not belong to the proletarian class are treated as deadly enemies and criminals. Communism wants to wipe out deliberately and utterly all the historical tradition that we have learnt and loved. It wants to set its vague schemes for promoting the happiness of the nations in place of the old and well-tried political institutions, because it declares that these institutions are unjust, one-sided and out-of-date. Every work of man is incomplete. Nothing on earth is perfect. This is what communism has not yet realised. And is not communism unjust and one-sided? With murder and destruction as its henchmen to assist in carrying out its plans for ensuring the welfare of the people! "If you don't want to be my brother, I'll smash your skull." How many skulls are smashed for the purpose of realising communistic ideals is of no importance to a thorough-going communist, for it is not the communistic skulls that are smashed. I summed up my reflections: My loathing of communism is not a prejudice born of my "bourgeois milieu," but is based on the inhumanity which goes hand in hand with the practical realisation of communistic ideas. To my bourgeois feminine mind humanity and communism are as mutually incompatible as are humanity and war. Every practical realisation of an idea achieved at the cost of wholesale murder and brutal violence I believe to be a transitory victory, and the former values and existences whose destruction it involves I believe to be the needless victims of a gloomy fanaticism. A healthy, natural progress, truly beneficial to mankind, will leave no destruction in its wake. Isolated voluntary martyrs, who play the role of redeemers in the cause of progress, I am prepared to admit, but never brutal fury and destruction. Slowly but irresistibly the history of human evolution is unfolded. Where the limits are set to this evolution it is beyond our power to divine. But if an idea, which is human because sprung from a human brain, is also grounded on humanity, then it is irresistible and cannot be suppressed. Its time will come. But if an idea requires violence and brutality for its realisation, it is poisonous and poisons the atmosphere in which it is transitorily floating. Even beautiful and humane ideas may become poison if, in the manner of their realisation, they stray from the path of humanity. We have had experience of inhumanity during this war, inhumanity which might have been avoided by the rulers of the belligerent states if true humanity had dwelt in their hearts. Such inhumanity cannot bring any blessing. If the communistic idea, the realisation of which calls for no less destruction than war, is to be the sequel to the War which we have hardly yet surmounted, then God have mercy upon us, for then the acts of violence will begin in our own camp. I looked at Karl as he strode along beside me no less absorbed in thought than myself. My boy a perpetrator of violence in the service of his ideas. My motto in life, in accordance with which I

have striven to guide my thoughts and actions and whose beautiful words I owe to Saint Augustine, came to my mind: "In the essential—unity. In the doubtful—freedom. In everything—love." I shall need this rule more than ever in order to understand and to forgive. As we reached the streets leading to the railway stations, the scene completely changed. On the edge of the pavement soldiers returned from the Front were seated in long rows with their rucksacks: Many of them looked neglected and ailing. These crowds were still more dense round the railway stations, where the square and the adjacent spaces looked like some disorderly military camp. Although the weather was cold and stormy, many of the soldiers were only wearing their threadbare uniforms, without overcoats. Several times we were asked for cigarettes or food, but we had none to give. Among the soldiers there were also groups of civilians, and upon looking more closely and listening more attentively, one suddenly discovered that a market had sprung up on this place, though certainly without the sanction of the authorities. In this market, clothes, shoes, weapons, blankets and other still usable articles in the possession of the soldiers were being bartered for food or tobacco. Money was refused, for what could anyone buy with money, when everything that is of practical value to us at the present day, such as foodstuffs and clothes, is subject to Government control and only obtainable in exchange for the corresponding sections of ration cards and frequently not even for these? Galician refugees, mainly Jews, generally afforded one party to these transactions. Hundreds of thousands of these refugees have sought safety in Vienna, where in all probability they will settle down for good. The Government has done its best to provide some sort of shelter for the men returning from the Front, but many of them preferred to remain in the neighbourhood of the railway station because they hoped thereby to secure all earlier opportunity of being sent back to their homes by the local trains. Although most of the people, in spite of the brutalities they had experienced during the War, looked tired and peaceable, political agitators, who had obviously remained in the Hinterland during the War, were already at work. On the square, where ordinarily cabs and taxis picked up the travellers, some hundreds of soldiers were standing, listening to a speaker. This agitator, who was evidently attacking the existing social order, and whose face was distorted with his efforts, had so overstrained his voice that only now and then was it possible to catch one of the familiar clichés from the political text-book of a tub orator; otherwise, all that was audible was a hoarse bellow. But the clichés sufficed and were greeted with applause: a proof that logical argument is superfluous for the success of a popular orator. "No one does anything to help them, so they are electing their soldiers' councils, and they are quite right," Karl explained. How sad, how terribly sad! No one does anything to help them! Amid what ardent enthusiasm on the part of the civilian population did our soldiers set out for the Front. The wounded returning to the Hinterland were pampered and extolled as heroes. At the railway stations the men from the Front were made almost ill with the good things pressed upon them. And now ... what a contrast! Thrown entirely upon their own resources; in railway trucks filled to bursting; no food during the whole journey, which often lasted for days. Yet every soldier was longing in his heart to be at home and in safety at last, freed from the heavy shackles of war discipline which he had borne for so many years. The disappointments which await them in the Hinterland are bitter, for that which most of them craved—plenty to eat and tranquil sleep—is still for many no more than a beautiful dream. Our Government is not even able to supply the civilian population with the most necessary foodstuffs. What is to happen now, when hundreds of thousands of

demobilised soldiers will be making additional demands on our Food Control Centres? "We shall all starve together, Karl," I said, looking at a train which had just come in, bringing back hundreds of soldiers to Vienna. "Why?" said Karl. "The War has ended for us Austrians, and so the hunger blockade is bound to end too." For a moment I felt ashamed that I had not thought of this myself. Now for the first time we noticed that the railway booking office was closed. We asked an official how we could get to Mödling; he told us that until the demobilised soldiers had been conveyed to their destinations no civilians would be allowed on the trains, but that an old war lorry whose chauffeur had a turn for business took passengers to Baden and he advised us to try to get places in that. Karl wanted to seize this opportunity to go back home, but I found the chauffeur, and since, in addition to the very high fare for the journey, I gave him a packet of tobacco, he agreed to take us. There were no seats, and in any case sitting would have been impracticable, for we were standing pressed tightly together. Fortunately the sides were high enough to prevent our being jerked out. We all swayed in one compact mass, now to the right and now to the left, and it was lucky that the chauffeur was careful how he took the bends in the wretched roads, or we should probably have been overturned. Battered and bruised we alighted at Mödling, and as the train service from there to Laxenburg was suspended, there was nothing left for it but to do the journey on foot. The shortest route was by the side of the railway track, which ran across fields in the direction of the Laxenburger Park, visible like a green oasis in the distance. We noticed some horses with no one in charge of them searching for the scanty fodder among the stubble. Already in the neighbourhood of Mödling we found on and near the railway track objects which would not be found there in normal times: military caps, puttees, used cartridges, food tins and the like. As we approached Laxenburg these items of a soldier's equipment became more and more numerous.. We even found a pack-saddle and portions of a machine gun. Some children came towards us carrying cartridge boxes and rifles. When we asked how they had got hold of them, they said that they had found them. At Laxenburg we were told that, after the proclamation of the Armistice, every man and woman engaged in military service had simply run away without waiting to be formally disbanded. The regiment of Tyrolese Kaiserjäger stationed there had really no longer any connection with the genuine Kaiserjäger, who had been practically wiped out in the repeated Italian offensives. This regiment was, except for a few Tyrolese officers, composed of Czechs, Croats and Poles. The men, seized with a sudden freedom psychosis, had, despite the exhortations of their officers, set off then and there to march to Mödling after first paying a visit to the military storehouses. They hoped to be able to board a train passing through Mödling. On the way they had simply thrown away any articles of their equipment that happened to be inconvenient or superfluous. We were stopped at Laxenburg by an armed citizen who told us that he belonged to the Self Defence Association. He informed us that it was forbidden to take away provisions from Laxenburg and its surroundings. I thanked him for the information and discussed with Karl what we were to do. Karl was in a very bad temper, and told me that he had from the first looked upon this journey as waste of time. "Indeed, and yet you all want food. Where am I to get it if not here?" Karl assured me that we should soon have plenty to eat, for the Government would be transferred to other hands and this would put an end to all the existing mismanagement. I made no reply, for I had no faith in his theories and felt no desire to engage in an argument. When I reached the farm of my benefactress, I found her husband at home with what appeared to be a serious injury to his leg. She complained to

me that she had vainly implored the village doctor to come and see him. He was so busy attending to the crowds of sick and wounded men from the Front that up to now he had not been able to find time. As they knew that I had often helped my husband with his patients, the farmer asked me at any rate to loosen his bandage, as he thought that it was causing him acute pain. I did as he asked and found a very nasty looking leg, so that I resolved to go to a doctor whom I knew at the Schloss military hospital and try to ensure that the man had proper attention. The doctor was very obliging, but he told me that he was suffering from a sudden shortage of assistants and nurses, since many of the ambulance staff had deserted their posts when the Armistice was proclaimed. He was also very short of bandages and had grave doubts whether it would be possible to continue the work at the hospital. Although overloaded with work, he came to see the wounded farmer, and declared that he needed hospital treatment, as there was a danger that the leg might have to be amputated. The farmer, however, refused emphatically to "go back to the War," the military hospital being associated in his mind with the horrors of the War from which he had just escaped. We were obliged, therefore, to confine ourselves to endeavouring to relieve the pain and putting him to bed with fresh bandages. Both the doctor and I impressed upon the wife that she must let him know at once if her husband got worse, as his life might depend upon it. I was told that at the telephone exchanges the soldiers and non-commissioned officers on duty had simply made off, and that Laxenburg volunteers—women and girls—were managing the telephone service as best they could. Thus the whole military apparatus so laboriously built up was utterly broken down and unusable. How long it may be before everything is once more proceeding along normal, peaceful lines! The farmer, who now after a successful injection was lying in bed free from pain, was engaged in conversation by Karl, and soon they were both of one mind that the Food Control Centres in the Hinterland were thoroughly mismanaged and were trying to rob the farmers of all they had without in any way benefiting the soldiers. The farmer swore that he would not part with any more of his scanty remaining supplies, seeing that half his land was lying fallow for lack of working hands. At this moment the farmer's ten-year-old son, Pepi, rushed into the room, very excited. He was wearing shoes with wooden soles, which made a terrible clatter on the hard floor: "Father, Father, I've got a white horse, a beautiful white horse. I've tied him up by the spring outside. He's drinking and drinking; he's so thirsty." And as no one knew what he meant and his father said crossly: "Peperl, have you turned crazy?" he ran to the door opening on to the farmyard and flung it wide open. "Now you can see the white horse, Father." And indeed, tied up by the spring, was an animal which though rather thin was indubitably a white horse. Peperl did not wait to be asked. "It was in our field." "Ah, so that's it," said the farmer in a tone of understanding. "They've let it loose, so that someone else shall look after it." And he told us that in Carinthia and other districts which lay on the return route of the army hundreds of ownerless cavalry horses were roaming about. The military authorities did not bother about them. People who thought they could feed them caught them to use as draught horses. A number had been slaughtered. "The white horse must be one of them. Come here, Pepi. You're a clever lad. Put the horse in the stable and give him an armful of hay. Mother shall tell the police he's here and they can fetch him and pay the cost of his feed; else here he shall stay." "Hurra!" cried Peperl and clattered out of the room. "He's a sharp little lad, is Peperl," said the farmer's wife proudly, "he helps me on the farm already." "Aye," said the farmer, "till the next war. Then perhaps they'll make a cripple of him." "No, farmer," said Karl. "There'll be no more

war. We'll see to that." "If it were only true," said the farmer's wife. At this point I turned the conversation on to the purpose of my visit, and the farmer declared that he would help me, but he wouldn't take money, for there was nothing to be bought with it. But in exchange for tobacco, or a dress for the wife or shoes for the children I could have something. Fortunately my husband had quite a large quantity of tobacco and boxes of cigars left over from peace time. I promised the farmer half a pound of tobacco and told him I could give him a small sample of it at once. Meanwhile, the farmer's wife had filled Karl's rucksack and my hand-basket with dainties such as black bread, bacon, lard, butter, flour, peas, eggs and potatoes. Karl stuck a large bottle of milk in his military overcoat, for the farmer still had a few cows left. In order to evade the Laxenburg local guard, we decided to go to the station of Guntramsdorf, which was an hour's walk from the farm, and to try to get on from there to Vienna by a Südbahn train. On the roads we met groups of soldiers from the Front making their way back to their homes on foot. The people in the villages and farms were terrified of them, for it was said that not a hen or a pig was safe against their depredations. Could one blame them? Torn away from their certain means of livelihood in order to defend their country, broken and exhausted in body and soul, they returned to the Hinterland and home for which they had yearned so passionately and were met with only hunger and privation. "What was the use of our going through all that?" was the question one heard again and again. A good-natured old countryman had attached himself to us; when a large group of soldiers became visible in the distance he advised us to go out of their way, and we hurriedly took refuge behind a haystack and waited until the men had passed. Karl did not approve of this at all. He grumbled. and muttered to himself and I was thankful that he was still so weak from his illness and the fatigue of carrying the heavy rucksack that he turned faint and had to sit down beside us pale and panting. The countryman handed him a bottle of brandy: "Drink some of that; it's plum brandy." And, when Karl had recovered his breath: "It's shameful to hide from one's comrades as one would from thieves and murderers. But that's what they are—trained thieves and murderers, the men who are coming back from the War," said the countryman. "They've been taught to rob and murder." The men passed us, walking wearily and out of step. They had two goats with them. "Look there," said the countryman. "They didn't find those two goats on the Italian Front." Since a cow is difficult to feed in the Hinterland owing to the shortage of fodder, and moreover most of the cows were requisitioned in order to supply meat for the soldiers at the Front, recourse was had to goats for the milk supply, and happy is the man who can feed a goat and so procure milk for his children. A November wind was blowing across the fields, and we were chilled to the bone when at length we reached Guntramsdorf and were taken on by a goods train to Vienna. At the station the Soldiers' Councils had assumed control. Their activity consisted mainly in searching the arriving and departing, civilians for foodstuffs. Fortunately, Karl was wearing his uniform, from which, in accordance with his political views, he had removed the marks of distinction. His clothes were so shabby that he was taken for a common soldier and left unmolested. On the other hand, they tried to take away the contents of my basket. Karl, however, took two of the soldiers aside and, after a brief conversation which I was unable to hear, they allowed me to pass, a little grudgingly, but without lightening the contents of my basket. I was protected by my son's communistic views, and trouble and want had so far demoralised me that I made no protest. But I was ashamed none the less. When we reached home, a new and a sad surprise was awaiting me. Rudi had been sent back wounded. He was

lying in the Wiedner Hospital, where immediately after his arrival one of his legs had been amputated at the knee and the other half-way up the thigh. Liesbeth was almost in despair, for this meant that her husband's career as an officer was ended. Liesbeth told me that Rudi had been wounded immediately after the conclusion of the Armistice with the Italians. After our troops had ceased to make any resistance, the Italians pursued and fired at them for hours, so that large numbers of our men were killed and wounded and several divisions were taken prisoners. After the Armistice! Our generals protested, but to no purpose. The Italians felt that they were the victors and proceeded to trample on the vanquished in the most brutal fashion in order to make us realise that we were utterly at their mercy for our weal or woe. I was indignant. The Italians ought not to have degraded themselves by this cheap and barbarous "success." But such is war—the very epitome of all human vileness. Rudi insisted on being conveyed to Vienna, as he did not want to risk falling into the hands of the Italians. It was also reported that the Italians had occupied the old German towns of Bozen and Meran, and that even Innsbruck was not safe from them. Where was it all going to end? I soothed Liesbeth's agitation with hackneyed phrases to the effect that things might be worse and that one must be thankful for small mercies. . . . After I had given Erni and Karl some food, I fell on to my bed dead-tired and slept deeply and heavily.

NOVEMBER 8TH, 1918

FAILURE OF THE MEAT SUPPLY. KARL'S COMMUNISTIC PROPAGANDA

Kathi woke me and reminded me that I wanted to take my place in the queue for horse-flesh at 7 o'clock this morning. Ten dekagrammes (about 3½ ounces) of horse-flesh per head and food-card section are to be given out to-day for the week. The cavalry horses held in reserve in the Hinterland by the military authorities are being slaughtered for lack of fodder, and the people of Vienna are for a change to get a few mouthfuls of meat of which they have so long been deprived. Horse-flesh! I have bought it once or twice before from the illicit dealers, without saying anything to Liesbeth and Wolfi. I tried, by means of vinegar and spices, to smother the sweetish taste which was so repugnant to me, and assured the children that it was cow's flesh. But though my appetite was sharpened by genuine hunger, not once was it appeased by this food. I admit that it is prejudice. In the objective zoological hierarchy a horse, perhaps, ranks above an ox, a sheep or a pig. Why should not one be able to eat a slaughtered horse with as much appetite as an ox or sheep or pig? I should like to know whether my instinctive repugnance to horse-flesh as food is personal, or whether my dislike is shared by many other housewives. My loathing of it is based, I believe, not on a physical but on a psychological prejudice. I do not rank the horse, in respect of intelligence, above all the animals of its species (for instance, above the stag). But I believe that the horse, in virtue of the special services which it renders to man, has become in a certain sense man's comrade. Any relation but comradeship between man and the horse he rides or drives seems to me absolutely wrong. Where whip and spur hold sway there will never be comradeship. A butcher who slaughters horses or a brutal coachman who beats his horse without mercy would never be able to understand my point of view. Such people would be able to enjoy horse-flesh and even dog-flesh, for it seems to me that the eating of horse-flesh is only one degree removed from the eating of dog-flesh. Indeed, the thought of eating dog-flesh fills me with just the same repugnance—though perhaps to an intenser degree—as I feel to the eating of horse-flesh. A dog may be even more intimately

associated with his master than a horse. He lives with his master under one roof and remains in his company even when he is not rendering him any direct service. I am very fond of dogs and value their good qualities; and I have always felt a warm admiration for a noble horse which in its imperishable sense of duty "dies in harness," as the saying goes. The thought that now hundreds of those noble horses are bleeding to death beneath the butcher's knife fills me with loathing and pity. I cannot refrain from taking this opportunity of alluding to the grotesque lies of the Entente war propagandists, who in all seriousness accused us and our German allies of devouring our fallen soldiers. This is one of the many sad chapters in the World War in which the contest was waged with the most cruel and unfair weapons. The Entente Press in particular succeeded in poisoning the souls of the nations and infecting them—and above all, the ingenuous population in America—with a boundless hate. Whether they still look back on this achievement with pride, I cannot conjecture. I have wandered from the point, and I now return to my unpleasant housewife's duty of standing in a queue for horse-flesh. "Oh, Kathi, if only it weren't horse-flesh!" I sighed. "But, gnädige Frau, we must be glad that we can get any meat at all. It's a fortnight since we last had any in the house, and the young gentlemen need some strengthening food once in a while." I overcame my repugnance, rebuked myself for being sentimental, and left the house. A soft, steady rain was falling, from which I tried to protect myself with goloshes, waterproof and umbrella. As I left the house before seven o'clock and the meat distribution did not begin until nine o'clock, I hoped to get well to the front of the queue. No sooner had I reached the neighbourhood of the big market hall than I was instructed by the police to take a certain direction. Although the people were standing six in a row, and six persons at a time were to be admitted, I was obliged to make a halt some minutes' walk from the gates of the hall. The police were examining the ration cards of all the people in the queue to see whether they were entitled to horse-flesh. I estimated the crowd waiting here for a meagre midday meal at two thousand at least. Hundreds of women had spent the night here in order to be among the first and make sure of getting their bit of meat. Many had brought with them improvised seats—a little box or a bucket turned upside down. No one seemed to mind the rain, although many were already wet through. They passed the time chattering, and the theme was the familiar one: What have you had to eat? What are you going to eat? One could scent an atmosphere of mistrust in these conversations: they were all careful not to say too much or to betray anything that might get them into trouble. At length the sale began. Slowly, infinitely slowly, we moved forward. The most determined, who had spent the night outside the gates of the hall, displayed their booty to the waiting crowd: a ragged, quite freshly slaughtered piece of meat with the characteristic yellow fat. Some people with a turn for business tried, with more or less success, to retail the precious food, raising the price to repay them for the hours they had spent waiting. They alarmed those standing at the back by telling them that there was only a very small supply of meat and that not half the people waiting would get a share of it. The crowd became very uneasy and impatient and, before the police on guard could prevent it, those standing in front organised an attack on the hall which the salesmen inside were powerless to repel. Everyone seized whatever he could lay his hands on, and in a few moments all the eatables had vanished, as though devoured by a hungry swarm of locusts. In the confusion stands were overturned, and the officials got some rough handling, until finally the police forced back the aggressors and closed the gates. The crowds waiting outside, many of whom had been there all night and were soaked through, angrily demanded

their due, consisting on this occasion of a scrap of horse-flesh, and refused to budge from the spot, whereupon the mounted police made a little charge, provoking a wild panic and much screaming and cursing. I fled into the adjacent public park but was driven out again, and at length I reached home, depressed and disgusted, with a broken umbrella and only one gosh. We housewives have during the last four years grown accustomed to standing in queues; we have also grown accustomed to being informed after hours of waiting that the supplies are exhausted and that we can try again in a week's time with the pink card, section No. so-and-so; in the meantime we are obliged to go home with empty hands and still emptier stomachs. These disappointments are the order of the day. Only very seldom do those who are sent away disappointed give cause for police intervention. One hears a little grumbling, and then the women go home and continue their grumbling there, but it is rare for any of them to adopt an aggressive attitude. On the other hand, it happens more and more frequently that one of the pale, tired women who have been waiting in a queue for hours collapses from exhaustion and has to be taken away from the Food Centre in an ambulance. The turbulent scenes which occurred to-day inside and outside the large market hall seemed to me perfectly natural. In my dejected mood the patient apathy with which we housewives endure all our domestic privation seemed to me blameworthy and incomprehensible. Karl immediately tried to profit by my state of mind to win me over to his communistic views: "Abolition of the present incapable bourgeois form of government, war on capitalism, war profiteers and exploiters of the starving people, etc." But my inherited bourgeois outlook made me see and fear in these familiar catchwords merely a provocation to fresh war and hatred, and I protested immediately against Karl's introduction of communistic propaganda into my house. My own state of mind made me realise, however, how easy it must be to upset the moral equilibrium of whole classes of the population who have been forced out of their ordinary habits of life by this unhappy war and now fall an easy prey to the political agitator. Although the German armies are still fighting on the western Front, the War is ended for us Austrians and has given place to an armistice. The terrible massacre of human lives has ended as far as we are concerned. After four years that seemed as if they would never end, I have to mourn a terrible war sacrifice: my husband and Otto dead, Erni for the time being deprived of his sight; Rudi a cripple with only half a leg; Karl utterly changed owing to his head wound and perhaps not sane; Liesbeth weak and ailing for lack of nourishing food, Aunt Bertha bedridden with bone-softening due to under-nourishment. Since the hospitals are full to overflowing and no longer take civilians unless their lives are in danger, there was nothing else to be done but to have Aunt Bertha conveyed to my flat, so that I could nurse and look after her. Wolfi, who is now in his sixth year, is healthy and always in high spirits, as well as good and intelligent, though he is very small for his years. Five of my nephews and one of my nieces were sacrificed to the war fury, but as to them I cannot go into greater detail here. The result of these four most terrible years I have ever experienced. is, as regards my immediate family, consisting of eight persons (I do not include Aunt Bertha, who had hitherto lived by herself), namely: Victor, my husband, Karl, Otto and Ernst, my sons; Liesbeth, my daughter, Rudi, my son-in-law, and Wolfi, my grandson:

2 dead. 3 seriously injured. 1 invalid.

Out of eight people six clawed by the devilish talons of war. Of these six, two torn from us for ever (Victor, Otto). Of the remaining four: Erni, at 19 years of age, condemned to lifelong darkness through loss of his sight; Karl, with his moral equilibrium seriously disturbed as a result of his head-wound; Rudi, a poor helpless cripple owing to the loss of both legs; Liesbeth, his wife, suspected of tuberculosis as the result of insufficient nourishment. Wolfi at a tender age in constant danger of infection. The eighth, myself, still in health, but nervously overstrained and in need of a rest. Fully conscious of my heavy obligations, and firmly resolved to withstand the tempests of fate and, under these melancholy circumstances still to make the best of everything. I want to fill my dear invalids with resignation and courage to bear their fate. I want to try as far as possible to gather together the scanty remnants of their shattered lives and to make those lives worth living. I want to try, under these bitter, altered circumstances, to procure for them some meagre joys, without which such terrible blows of fate could not be borne for long, until time, that infallible though often cruelly relentless physician, has transformed even the most crushing losses into habit. I lay aside my pen and fold my hands. " God Almighty! Give me the strength to go on fighting for the happiness of my children! "

NOVEMBER 18TH, 1918

For ten days I have found not a single quiet moment in which to pour out in my diary a heart that was often full to bursting. These brief intervals of mental recollection and relaxation help me through so much. They help me to find myself again when my self-control threatens to desert me. Here I can say frankly everything that I am forced to hide from my children, my friends, and from all strangers. Not because I am insincere and do not love the truth, but because the relentless truth would give pain to others. Although hopelessness and despair weigh upon my heart like a heavy stone, I must seem confident and cheerful to my poor children; I must make myself believe that I am really far better off than hundreds of thousands of other women. This is indeed a fact; I am at least immune from material cares and can help my children, since I have a small fortune, safely invested in gilt-edged securities. God be thanked for that! The last ten days have brought us Austrians a whole train of momentous happenings. Our Emperor Karl renounced on November 12th his control of state affairs, but without abdicating. The Socialist party leaders have proclaimed the republican form of government in Austria, with Dr. Renner as first President. This political revolution is being enacted without any great commotion, since both the bourgeois elements and the royalist officers and soldiers maintain a passive attitude, and the Socialist leaders have the organised working classes in hand (I have to admit it to the honour of both), and guard against needless excesses. Only the Communists, who have formed a Red Guard under Captain Frey, have adopted an aggressive policy, but are being kept in check by the joint efforts of the Volkswehr and the Vienna Police.

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The official Armistice was declared on November 4th. To-day, November 18th, there is no trace of any improvement in our food position. My husband's cousin, Lieutenant-General R., explained this melancholy fact to me as follows : "All the non-German peoples hitherto united in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy have, during the four war years, been more and more stirred to revolt by their irredentist leaders, who have been encouraged by the Entente to the

utmost of their capacity. After we were forced to capitulate, the Italians and Serbs in the South and the Czechs in the East occupied large stretches of territory belonging to the old monarchy. The Italians drove us to the Brenner and the Serbs pushed forward to Marburg and Klagenfurt. This occupation of purely German territory will, let us hope, be temporary, for the final frontiers, which will certainly not be drawn favourably for us, will only be fixed when peace is concluded. None the less, the Czechs, Italians and Serbs have in the meantime drawn arbitrary frontiers and shut us off from these territories and all their Austrian inhabitants. No more supplies of foodstuffs are to be expected from these regions. "With Hungary we were already having serious disputes last summer (1918), because she made such flagrantly selfish use of her abundant farm produce. Karolyi had at once strictly forbidden the export of foodstuffs. " The territory of the new German-Austrian republic which is not in enemy occupation, is only a fraction of the former territories united in the monarchy. The Czechs have pushed forward their frontiers to close upon Vienna and deprived us of the most important necessities of life, such as milk, fat, sugar and coal. "Only the frontier separating us from Germany is free for imports. But the Germans, in spite of their strict organisation, are also suffering from a shortage and can only spare us very little. Since the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm and of so many German princes, civil war is raging in many parts of the country. "According to the reports which have been received up to now, the terms of the Armistice are incredibly cruel and exorbitant, but we shall be forced to agree to everything in order to put an end to the blockade." This was our cousin's explanation. The Socialist Government, with Dr. Renner as President at its head, in vain implored the Entente to raise the blockade and let us have foodstuffs. We were required to hand over almost all our agricultural machinery, all our motor lorries and almost all our railway engines and rolling stock, and the fulfilment of our request for food was made dependent upon the fulfilment of these conditions. Thereupon our Government decided in favour of union with Germany, since little Austria was completely helpless against the enemy's terrorism. The proclamation of the union with Germany was received in Vienna with the utmost enthusiasm, and the strains of the Wacht am Rhein were heard everywhere. I have always thought of myself as German and with pride, in contrast with many German Austrians, who were at one time anxious to forget about their German blood. The fervour with which they are now all proclaiming their German origin astonishes me somewhat, just as I fail to understand many ardent republicans who only a few days ago were firm monarchists! The proclamation of union with Germany evoked a violent protest from France, and Vienna was occupied by Italian regiments in order that our Ministers might not hit upon the original idea of taking independent measures in the interests of their own country. For the French have the leading say in the Entente, and they think that union might make the Germans too strong.

NOVEMBER 20TH, 1918

MOMENTOUS DECREES: HEATING OF ROOMS SUSPENDED. ONLY ½ CWT. COAL PER WEEK AND KITCHEN . ONLY ONE ROOM PER HEAD ALLOWED.

Our flat consists of six rooms, with kitchen, maids' room and bathroom. As eight persons live in these rooms, we have nothing to fear from the Government Control Commissions, which are rigorously commandeering unused rooms. Erni and Wolfi are sleeping in my bedroom. Karl has his own room. Aunt Bertha is in the writing-room. Liesbeth and Rudi I have put in what used to be our dining-room, since, in view of the difficulty of heating, we make do with one room as

sitting-room and dining-room. This is the large room which used to be the drawing-room, looking on to the garden and containing the piano. Up to now I have been able to keep this room at a tolerable temperature of 12-14 degrees Reaumur by means of a small iron stove. The room has two windows and a double glass door leading on to the verandah. As we get all the winter sunshine on this side, we have even now heat and light. I have furnished this room as best I could, and have taken pains to reserve a special place for every member of the family. Under the large glass chandelier stands the dining table. At every window I have set a writing table. The large gentleman's writing table with its many drawers has been appropriated by Karl. My own writing table is used alternately by Liesbeth and myself. Poor Rudi, who is still lying in hospital and is visited daily by Liesbeth, is to have his wheel chair placed before the glass doors, which, with Kathi's help, I have sealed against draughts expressly for this purpose. The wheel chair has two handles by means of which the invalid is able to propel himself. Liesbeth, who is still suffering from the discomforts of her pregnancy and was quite crushed by Rudi's misfortune, has roused herself a little in response to my entreaties. She looks after Erni and has studied the alphabet for the blind with him, so that now they can read together. Erni, however, thinks that this is all quite superfluous, as he is convinced that he will very soon have recovered his sight. He submits to this instruction for the blind mainly because he enjoys Liesbeth's company and it helps to pass the time. Wolfi has become Erni's best and most faithful friend. He takes him for walks; he tells him about everything he sees and never leaves him without asking whether there is anything he wants and assuring him that he will very soon be back again. Wolfi also visits poor Aunt Bertha, who can now hardly walk at all and only moves from her bed to her armchair and back again. Yet she is always cheerful and good tempered, with a genius for diffusing consolation all around her. As she has the room next to the sitting-room, I was able, by opening the door, to maintain a tolerable temperature in her room too. The bedrooms were only heated very little and according to the outside temperature. Not until the temperature sank to freezing point did Kathi heat the bedrooms a little after she had tidied them. As in other years, I had during the summer saved up a little stock of coal in the cellar. When the decree was issued that no one must possess or consume more than $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of coal per week and that it must be used exclusively for cooking purposes, I ought to have notified to the authorities my little supply of coal, which amounted to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons. Probably it would be requisitioned; possibly I should be fined. During the War there had been no Government restrictions in regard to wood and coal. The prices were very high compared with peace prices, but it was possible to secure considerable quantities from a coal-merchant if one had been a regular customer. Now the difficulty of supplying coal for household needs has suddenly become very painfully aggravated, for the Czechs have completely stopped the export of coal to Austria and Germany, while the German coal-mining districts are occupied by the French or the Poles, who likewise refuse to supply any coal to the vanquished nations. My simple woman's brain tries in vain to understand why the victors have adopted these measures. The temperature has fallen considerably during the last weeks. Heating of the living rooms has been forbidden by the authorities. A new struggle, which we were spared during the War, is being imposed upon us housewives: the struggle against the winter cold in our homes. Since I, like most other housewives, had already infringed the law by resorting to complicated and forbidden methods of procuring the most necessary articles of food, I resolved to run the further risk of keeping my little stock of coal and, in consequence, of coming into conflict with

the new authorities. As the cellars were to be searched by the Volkswehr for supplies of wood and coal, I had to act at once. I came to an understanding with our good-natured house-porter, promising him 2 cwt. of coal if he would quietly transfer on to the verandah the stock of coal in my cellar. The other people living in the house must not see it, for how often it had happened that an envious and less fortunate neighbour had secretly given information to the authorities! At eleven o'clock at night, when everyone else was asleep, I began, aided by Kathi and the house-porter, to transport to our verandah the supply of coal in the kitchen. The porter used the Viennese "Holzbutte," a large wooden pail carried on the back. Kathi and I together carried the washing-basket. As we live on the third floor, we had to go up and down four storeys each time, for there is no lift in our house. By two o'clock in the morning Kathi was so exhausted that I had to send her to bed. At four o'clock we had almost all the coal on the verandah. But both I and the porter were utterly worn out. I hastily gave the old man a glass of plum brandy, washed myself clean of the coal-dust, and crept quietly into bed, so as not to disturb Wolfi and Erni. That I should one day, in order to escape freezing in my own home, carry up my coal and thereby constitute myself a criminal, was something that no one had prophesied at my cradle. But this is war, the war of the housewives against that lack of primary physical necessities which is evidently not to cease even after the cessation of the Great War in the trenches.

NOVEMBER 22ND, 1918

How well advised I was in transferring my coal to the verandah so promptly was proved to-day. The cellars of our house were searched for coal by the Volkswehr and their assistants, and all supplies in excess of $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. were requisitioned. My coal on the verandah and my meagre supplies of flour, peas and tinned milk, caused me some anxious moments. Two soldiers and a civilian strode through the rooms of our flat, ostensibly to see whether we had space for further inmates. As they did so, they peeped into some cupboards. The sight of bedridden Aunt Bertha, blind Erni and poor crippled Rudi, who was brought home yesterday, may have induced them to make no more than a superficial investigation, for they found nothing suspicious, and I was grateful for their perhaps unconscious humanity. Thus the Armistice had achieved two things: we were no longer free within our own four walls, and we had no fuel. But I was firmly resolved to continue the struggle. I had fetched from the garret an oil stove which had sometimes in very cold weather been used in the unheated ante-room during my husband's consulting hours. I procured privately from the stores at which I dealt a few litres of oil, and now I heat our living room, shifting the small portable stove near to the person most in need of warmth. At the same time, however, I resolved by some means to secure a supply of wood, which is not yet rationed. Our house-porter has a brother who is a cab-driver. During the War his horse was requisitioned for the army, and he himself was deprived of his occupation. Now he has had no difficulty in procuring one of the army horses, and sits enthroned once more on his box-scat. We are living in a time when a relation or a friend among the innkeepers, store-proprietors, cab-drivers or even peasants is an important factor in one's life. I hear that since this coal decree large numbers of the population of Vienna have taken steps to help themselves. Crowds of men, women and children make their way to the lovely Wienerwald, which forms such a picturesque setting for the charmingly situated villa suburbs of Vienna—Grinzing, Dobling, Potzleinsdorf, etc. Armed with perambulators and wheelbarrows, with drawcarts and sledges, with axes and saws, they make war upon the poor peaceful Wienerwald,

whose further extremity does indeed contain a few absurd little trenches, which, for all their use in resisting a hostile invasion might just as well not have existed. Apart from these, the picturesque dignity of the forest had not been disturbed by the turmoil of war. Now the Wienerwald, too, is experiencing the horrors of a war. Just as in regions ravaged by artillery fire the forests covering whole mountain slopes were rased to the ground, so now young trees and old trees alike, and without any discrimination, fall victims to the wood-hunters of Vienna. These marauders attack in preference the slopes adjacent to the roads, in order to save themselves a long journey. They saw and hack, clumsily and destructively, at the level which happens to be most convenient. The young trees planted for purposes of afforestation are trampled down, and the trunks which cannot be carried away are left standing half sawn through. I was an eye-witness of all this as I drove to Salmannsdorf with my friend the cab-driver, who had harnessed his horse before a little cart. At Salmannsdorf I knew a small timber merchant from whom I hoped to secure a cart-load of firewood for my iron stove. When I asked why the authorities allowed this reckless destruction of forests, most of which belonged to the State, I was told that the new Government did not want, by rigorous protection of the Wienerwald, to make itself unpopular with the poor people who could not buy themselves any wood, and so did not interfere. But surely it would have been more rational to have had the forests thinned systematically and distributed the wood among the most needy! I bought a cartload of wood for a sinfully high price, though the dealer assured me that he was almost giving it away and that next time it would cost double as much. After my mission had been successfully accomplished I journeyed proudly home by the side of my wood and by good luck on the way home gave a lift to a friendly member of the Volkswehr, who helped me to ward off successfully some attempts made by the wood-hunters to plunder my cart. The exertions which the procuring and protecting of the fuel had cost me made it seem very precious, and I was constantly contriving new ways of eking it out. A diminutive stove, fitted to the circular opening of a kitchener, can be heated with a very small amount of waste wood. Kathi manages it very well, and also the cooking-box, in which the food is placed after it has been heated up; then the box is firmly closed and the food goes on cooking inside it without requiring any fuel. Before each door of our tiled stoves I have suspended a small iron slow-combustion stove, and am thus able, with the aid of my wood, to maintain a fair degree of heat in any of the rooms without infringing the law. I have done all in my power to preserve my poor invalids from the winter cold. Kathi's sister has a small farm on the border of Styria. Apart from the three meatless days a week decreed by the Government, it is becoming impossible to procure meat in Vienna. As a rule the only thing to be had is unpalatable dried cod; and so Kathi has suggested the following plan: Our cellar is almost empty. It is comparatively warm and has a large window looking on to the street. Kathi proposes to drive over to her sister and bring back a few laying hens and some rabbits. Kathi will make cages for them in the cellar out of old boxes, and we shall have our suppliers of eggs and meat on the premises. Wolfi is enthusiastic at the idea of being able to feed hens and rabbits. Kathi has dispelled my doubts as to the possibility of feeding them by reminding me of my Laxenburg friends.

NOVEMBER 23RD, 1918

EDITH'S GOOD INFLUENCE. EDITH'S VOICE. KARL AND EDITH

Rudi is in despair. He cannot get used to the idea of being a cripple for the rest of his life, and Liesbeth, unfortunately, is not equal to cheering him up. Edith, Karl's fiancée, who has been released from her work at the hospital and so has time to help in looking after my invalids, is a blessing to us all. This slim, fair girl with her pure Madonna face and her capacity for unselfish devotion, has no lack of energy and strength of will in pursuing her ends, though she is never officious or tiresome. She was worshipped at the hospital, because she has the gift of imparting even to the most severely wounded something of that natural, cheerful calm which emanates from her whole nature like a mysterious healing balm. She could even cheer and console Rudi, when his strong frame was shaken with heartrending sobs and he talked of ridding himself of his useless life, which was only a burden to others. To Erni, too, she was an affectionate comrade, and he was not a little proud of having made, as he said, a special discovery about her. Erni had heard Edith singing a lullaby to little Wolfi, when he had a slight feverish cold and could not get to sleep :

"Schlafe mein Prinzchen, schlaf ein
Blume schläft un Vögelein,
Alles im Schlosse schon liegt
Alles im Schlummer gewiegt,
Nur in der Zofe Gemach,
Hort man ein schmachzendes Ach
Was dieses Ach wohl mag sein?
Schlafe mein Prinzchen, schlaf ein!"

Erni told me that on the way to his bedroom, where I and Wolfi sleep too, he caught the notes of this exquisite lullaby by our immortal Mozart, and crept softly up to the door in order to hear the better and not to disturb the singer. He heard a wonderfully rich soprano voice whose soft mezza voce gripped his heart. He knew that it was Edith, who was singing Wolfi to sleep. "Mother," said Ernst, and he felt excitedly for my hand, "Mother, Edith has a voice, an exquisite voice. It must be trained; I shall give her singing lessons." "Don't be in too great a hurry, Erni," I said. "You must find out first if Edith is willing to have singing lessons." "Oh, she has agreed to that already," he answered. "I asked her at once." "And how about Karl?" I insisted. "He must agree too." "Oh, Karl is bound to be pleased if I help Edith to develop a talent—perhaps a great talent—that has been slumbering until now." "You know Karl," I said, "and how strangely contradictory he often is. I almost believe that Karl is jealous of us all where Edith is concerned because she gives so much of herself to us." "Oh, Mother, if Edith is willing to take singing lessons of me she will persuade Karl to agree, and I should be so happy if I could do something for her." "Well, let us hope that Edith will reconcile Karl to the idea. Up to now she has always contrived to soothe him when he is exasperated with us for not sharing his political views. Do you remember how yesterday evening Rudi's and Karl's diametrically opposite views in regard to warfare and war-guilt threatened to lead to a serious quarrel? And how Edith at the critical moment steered Karl into calmer waters?" "There, you see, Mother, Edith can do anything with Karl. She has only to want it." With the self-willed persistence of his artist nature Erni now made the training of Edith's voice his foremost aim. The poor boy composed songs which she was to sing to him. Unfortunately, however, I have a feeling that Karl does not approve of

Edith's musical education, for he himself, since he has devoted himself so ardently to politics, has lost all his delight in music. I have tried several times to persuade Karl, who used to play both the violin and the viola, to join in playing something with Liesbeth and Erni. I hoped that this might soothe and relax his nerves, for Karl always seemed in a state of nervous irritation, which he only in some degrees repressed where Edith was concerned. But he flatly refused when I asked him to play his violin, and on my asking the reason replied: "Only people who don't know what to do with themselves can make music nowadays. The times are too serious to be squandered over such things." Fortunately Erni was not present, and so was spared the mortification of hearing this tactless answer; but I knew Karl's state of mind and was very much afraid that nothing would come of Edith's singing lessons.

NOVEMBER 27TH, 1918

STILL GREAT DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING FOOD SUPPLIES. ONLY ONE 16-CANDLE LAMP PER ROOM ALLOWED

The meat ration is 12 dekagrammes (about 4 ounces) per head and week, so that we are entitled to 96 dekagrammes per week for the eight members of our household. As in the army each man was allowed 40 dekagrammes daily, the 96 dekagrammes due to us weekly would in any case have constituted a very meagre allowance. But last week, after standing in a queue for hours, Kathi was only able to secure 20 dekagrammes of meat for the whole week for all eight hungry stomachs. The remainder of the allowance was given her in dried cod, since the Germans, who are not cut off from the sea as we are, at least had fish, some of which they were able to give us. Dried cod, at times the nearest approach to meat officially obtainable in Vienna, is, I believe, the secret abomination of many housewives. I can quite imagine that when other meat is easily obtainable one might now and then be quite glad to cook and eat dried cod for a change. Now it is one of the many food substitutes with which we were obliged to ruin our poor famished stomachs during the four war years. As it has to be soaked for a whole day in order to soften it preparatory to cooking, one is so nauseated by the smell by the time it is ready to serve that all appetite has vanished. For this reason I had long ceased to put dried cod on our table, but I smelt it for days at my neighbours'. As so often before, we were at a loss to compose the menu for our midday meal, but finally decided on bean soup and Quaker oats with cranberries. Thanks to my friend at Laxenburg, I had a little supply of pulse foods. They are nourishing, and my family do not dislike them. The cranberries Kathi had brought back from her sister's, and since they were preserved with real sugar, they were relished by all as a rare delicacy. Kathi told us that her sister made the syrup herself out of sugar beet. The hen and rabbit farm which Kathi had started in the cellar was gradually beginning to function and sometimes supplied us with one or two eggs a day, which seemed to us all a tremendous boon, for eggs were unobtainable in Vienna except by underhand means, when they cost three or four kronen apiece. Kathi brought up the first egg from the cellar with an air of almost religious solemnity, and it was handed round and admired like some precious jewel, while Kathi kept on warning us not to let it drop. . I reserved to myself the sole right of distributing these eggs among my invalids, in order to obviate any rivalry in self-sacrifice. I kept a careful record, so that I could always check whose turn it was to have an egg. As my peasant woman also let me have a few eggs now and then in exchange for tobacco for her husband, who had now almost completely recovered, I had the joy of being able to supply my household with this valuable

food fairly often. Nothing afforded Wolfi greater delight than to search the hens' nests for eggs. Yesterday, in his excitement, he stumbled on the cellar staircase with an egg in his hand, and his precious booty landed against the wall. Wolfi's misfortune was beyond repair. It was his supper and I had not another egg in the house. But when our need is sorest, God's help is nearest, and this help came quite unexpectedly through the medium of our house-porter. Again it was my husband's supply of tobacco which did me good service, as so often before in these difficult times. My husband had, in fact, been a great smoker and fancied that he could not live without his Trabucco cigars. As he feared that the quality of these cigars might suffer from the War, he had, at the beginning of the War, before tobacco was rationed, laid in a large supply of good Trabucco cigars. Smoking was his one weakness, and as the Government tobacco became gradually worse and worse and dearer and dearer, he was triumphant, since his good cigars were considerably cheaper. After his death I did not know at first what to do with the piles of cigar-boxes, for of my sons only Otto had been a regular smoker. Erni occasionally smoked a cigarette, while Karl had at the Front got into the habit of smoking a pipe and was not interested in the cigars. So I was able to dispose of them freely and to work wonders with them in my bartering transactions. Our house-porter asked me mysteriously whether I would give his son a few cigars in exchange for some pork and lard. Pork and lard! I could hardly believe my ears. But it was a fact. The house-porter told me that his son wanted to exchange about four pounds of pork and ten pounds of lard for fifty cigars. I went into the house-porter's flat, and there I found Schani, his son, cutting up half of a fat sow. When I asked him where he had got this treasure, he answered evasively: "We didn't go to the War in order to starve afterwards in the Hinterland. Everyone has to help himself as best he can." And then he praised the delicacy of the meat in the tones of an expert, for he was a butcher's apprentice. I watched him separating the meat from the fat, and was ashamed of the greedy delight which filled me at the sight, now become so rare, of an excellent piece of pork. At that moment I understood the acts of criminal violence now so frequently perpetrated against persons and property just for the sake of one satisfying meal. Schani was still wearing his dirty field uniform, though the former marks of distinction were missing. Round his sleeve was a red armlet, and red braid was sewn on to his cap. I handed him the cigar box. He sniffed at the cigars and said: "I'd rather have had Virginias." The house-porter wrapped up my treasures for me in some sheets of newspaper, and I hurried to our flat, in order that I might console Wolfi, who was still bewailing the loss of his egg, with a real pork chop. The fat was immediately melted with the utmost care by Kathi, who was in an ecstasy of enthusiasm at this stroke of luck, and, after much reflection, a portion of the meat was put on the verandah, where, as the temperature was below zero, it would keep fresh for the next few days. As we had received this week two pounds of potatoes per head, this supper was a banquet, for I was able to give every member of the household a piece of pork and two potatoes. A portion was set on one side for Karl, who has frequently been absent from home of late. It was a delight to see how they all enjoyed the meal, and how the depression which weighs upon all of us was perceptibly lightened by this appetising food. "Mummy," asked Wolfi, who had finished his portion and was wiping the fat from his plate with a piece of nasty yellow maize bread: "Mummy, why don't we have roast pork every day?" Liesbeth left the question unanswered, but Rudi, who was sitting at the dining-table in his wheel-chair, embarked on an explanation which soon soared far beyond a child's understanding: "You want to know why we don't eat roast pork every day. Well, the

explanation is very simple. We have at the moment in Austria a large number of two-legged pigs, who won't let themselves be slaughtered, but we have far too few four-legged pigs to enable us to eat roast pork every day. The two-legged pigs in this country cannot do anything to help matters, for the four-legged pigs, who used to come to us from Hungary, Serbia, Bohemia and Poland, are kept back by the two-legged pigs in those countries, and so we can't eat roast pork every day. Is that clear?" Wolfi did not look as if he had taken in a word of this explanation, though he had obviously tried very hard to understand what his father was saying; he cast a helpless glance at Aunt Bertha, who shares our meals, propped up in a comfortable armchair. "Are there really pigs with two legs?" he asked with a puzzled expression. Rudi burst out laughing. "Yes, indeed there are, my boy, and one must beware of them no less than of beasts of prey." This emphatic answer and his father's assertion that two-legged pigs do exist, utterly disconcerted Wolfi, but Aunt Bertha helped him out of his difficulty. Wolfi, my child, don't let your father upset your notions of natural history. The pigs that you are thinking of all have four legs. 'We cannot have roast pork every day because the soldiers, among whom I include your father, have eaten up all the pigs, and the countries that have pigs refuse to sell us any. And I will tell you what your father meant by the two-legged pigs; for it isn't right to give a child explanations that he can't understand. If you call man a donkey or a sheep or a pig, you are abusing him; you know that, don't you?' "Oh, yes," said Wolfi eagerly. "Uncle Karl always calls Kathi an old sheep." "Hush!" I said, for Kathi was just entering the room. "Well," Aunt Bertha continued, "one ought not, of course, to make such comparisons" ("The animals haven't deserved it," Rudi interrupted.) "One ought not to make them, because a well-bred, cultured person doesn't call names. But not everyone is well-bred and cultured, and so they do call names; and if someone calls a man a pig, he means that there is something unclean about him; he is not only unwashed but also a bad man. And your father meant that at the present day, here and in other countries, there are a great many bad men." Wolfi reflected for a moment; then he said, still thinking of the good roast pork he had just enjoyed: "But the pigs are not all dirty, if you wash them well; else we shouldn't eat them!" The explanation which Rudi now gave was just as incomprehensible to Wolfi as the first: "You are right, Wolfi," he said. "The four-legged pigs are washed before we eat them, whereas we often have to put up with the two-legged ones unwashed. Moreover, it is man who has made the four-legged pig such that the name 'pig' is sometimes used as a term of abuse for his fellow-men. Only when is was promoted to the position of a domestic animal did the honest wild boar become a pig in the human sense." Here Erni intervened, after Edith had cut up his portion so that he could easily eat it without help: "Let's have no more of this talk about pigs. The pork was delicious, and I am only interested to know how Mother secured this rare dish." "I should like to know that too," declared Rudi emphatically. And Liesbeth said: "You know that Mother works wonders in getting food for us, and that it is thanks to her ingenuity that we are all alive now." Kathi, who entered the room at that moment, saved me an answer. "Gnä Frau, do you know where Schani got that pork?" "No." "He stole it." "What! Good heavens! Here's a nice business!" we exclaimed simultaneously. And Kathi continued: "He had a quarrel with his father, and then the old man came upstairs and told me that Schani and some of his war comrades, all belonging to the Volkswehr, had simply gone to the cattle-house and killed and carried off some pigs." "A pretty business," I said; "and now we may all be sent to prison." "Why, gnä Frau? They never touch the Volkswehr men; they can do what they like. Schani came up after his father and

asked whether gnä Frau would like another pig next week." "Oh yes!" cried Wolfi. But I refused emphatically, and no one protested. Inwardly however, I resolved to keep in touch with Schani. Where our physical welfare was concerned I had long since abandoned all respect for laws the observance of which was equivalent to suicide and I seized every opportunity to preserve my family from the dangers of starvation and cold, which were now becoming more and more threatening. After this appetising meal we all felt more cheerful, and when Kathi had cleared the table and I had put some wood in the iron stove, Erni seated himself at the piano, while Liesbeth put Wolfi to bed. Rudi, Edith and I remained seated at the dining table, for a new decree forbade the use of more than one lamp in each room. Rudi, who has a certain amount of technical ingenuity, began drawing artificial legs, since none of those he has tried up to now have been comfortable. I fetched my patience cards out of the writing-table drawer, for that evening I meant to be thoroughly lazy for once. I was not going to think of food and fuel, and no one was to speak to me about them. Erni played the opening chords of Schubert's wonderful song, "Du bist die Ruh', der Friede mild." He called to Edith, recited the words, and begged her to sing to his accompaniment. Edith, who was not unfamiliar with the song, at first hummed it softly. Then, as if she could not resist the wonderful charm of the piece and Erni's playing, her voice began to express, doubtless unconsciously, all the emotion with which it filled her. She was wholly absorbed in the words and the music, and her sweet, clear voice trembled with emotion. Erni's playing harmonised perfectly with Edith's singing. He had thrown back his head, and a radiant smile played over his lips. Edith was standing just behind his chair with her hands clasped; she sang simply and without any physical effort. Her pure forehead, with the delicately arched dark eyebrows and the clear blue eyes beneath them, was bent forward slightly. It struck me that evening especially that Edith and Erni were very much alike, and that they might easily be taken for brother and sister. I had long since stopped setting out my patience cards. Rudi, too, had laid aside his drawing. We listened with our eyes fixed on these two young people who, in their rendering of this joint masterpiece of Schubert and Goethe had forgotten everyday life and its sorrows. Suddenly the door was flung open and Karl entered. Although he did not utter a word as he stood in the doorway, Erni stopped his playing, perhaps because of the cold draught which blew from the unheated lobby into the sitting-room and made me shiver. "Please do shut the door, Karl. You know what a struggle we have to keep this room warm." And when he had shut the door rather violently, I said: "Would you like your supper?" "No, thank you; I've lost my appetite." And with a surly glance at Edith, who had moved forward to welcome him: "I told you the other day that I don't approve of this dabbling with music at such a serious time." Erni stood up. A deep flush spread to the roots of his fair hair: "Do you think you can hurt me by saying that?" "I don't want to," answered Karl. "You are a poor innocent victim of the war profiteers. I don't grudge you your little bit of music, but Edith ought not to waste her time humming songs at such an important political epoch." And he turned to Edith: "I gave you a book to read. We might go into my room to discuss it. For here," he added in a mocking tone, "my expositions are not likely to excite much interest." "Into your room! But it isn't heated, and you've had the window open all day," I exclaimed in amazement. "That doesn't matter, does it, Edith? In the hospital you've grown accustomed to all sorts of temperatures!" And when Edith made no reply: "I'll let you have my sheepskin. You certainly won't freeze in that." Edith said that she must go home as it was already nearly nine o'clock, whereupon Karl decided to accompany her, and as they went out I heard him say: "This is the

second time, Edith, that you have gone away as soon as I arrived." We all felt bitter words rise to our lips, but we all suppressed them. When I asked Erni to play something else he refused at first, and when I begged him: "Erni, do please play the song of the tenth of May," he dropped heavily on to the music stool and began to play his composition with an almost peevish ill-will, quite unsuited to its melancholy harmonies. But, as so often before, music proved its power to soothe and console. Erni's playing became calmer and finally attuned itself to the wistful, yearning melody, which told of homesickness and the memory of a mother's tears wept in time of peace. The finale, which passed over into the major key in a rapid gradation, arched over the whole like a glorious rainbow over dark stormclouds. I went up to Erni and stroked his fair head: "Thank you, my child."

DECEMBER 3RD, 1918

"THE HUNGER BLOCKADE TO CONTINUE UNTIL PEACE IS FINALLY CONCLUDED. NEEDLESS INHUMANITY OF THE CZECHS"

The position of the housewives is becoming more and more difficult. Four weeks have elapsed since the announcement of the Armistice, but there is not the slightest improvement, or hope of improvement, in the food situation. The Entente knows no mercy. The Armistice conditions which Germany, Bulgaria and Austria had to accept unreservedly and without possibility of resistance, are tantamount to a continuation of hostilities by the most subtle weapons, weapons which threaten the life of the whole civilian population. Germany's situation is infinitely tragic, and one must go back to remotest antiquity to find any parallel to the cruelty of the victors. For fifty months the German army resisted the superior numbers of the enemy with unexampled heroism and devotion. Now, during its retreat, Marshal Foch is trying to wear out and destroy this army utterly. The Germans have been deprived of all means of transport, and they are expected to effect an orderly retirement of three million men in the shortest possible time at the most unfavourable season of the year. Vast numbers of brave men will perish of exhaustion or be taken prisoners during these forced marches. Marshal Foch is the brutal author of this despotic policy. In my eyes he is neither a hero nor a true soldier; for, if he were, he could not but feel respect for such a brave enemy as the Germans have proved. His treatment of them is neither chivalrous nor generous. Whether it is wise remains to be proved. Even the newly-founded League of Nations, which looks on unconcernedly at this malignant persecution of the vanquished, is seriously impaired by the inhuman Armistice conditions dictated by Foch. History will one day pronounce judgment upon these conditions, which far exceed any normal powers of fulfilment. In addition to the physical sufferings imposed upon us by the victors, we now have to endure their moral offensive against everything German. The Italians have placarded the walls with announcements that the occupation of German South Tyrol as far as the Brenner is to be permanent. We have learnt from bitter experience that Wilson's Fourteen Points were only lime-twigs designed to trap us through our longing for peace. I personally believe Wilson to be an idealist who was convinced that his peace points were practicable. The Entente merely used him as a welcome decoy bird. His message came to most of us like a message from Heaven. It promised us peace upon the most human conditions. Why continue this barbarous war? most people asked themselves. Wilson's Fourteen Points served to aggravate enormously the longing for peace among the population of the Central Powers. And when the War still went on because our leaders quite realised what the Fourteen

Points were worth, the ill-will of the population was directed against these leaders. How convenient Wilson was to the Entente! But what sad havoc has been made of Wilson's main point: the self-determination of nations! Three and a half million Germans, some of them in exclusively German-speaking territory, under Czech rule. The frontiers of the new Polish state driven into the heart of Germany. The whole of German South Tyrol as far as Brenner annexed by Italy. By the occupation of the German frontier territory the Italians have sown the seed of future wars in German soil and in German hearts. The German border territory up to the German-Italian language frontier, German Bozen with its many German castles, with its vineyards and meadows planted by Germans, the Meran province dear to every German, the many-towered German episcopal city of Brixen, the magnificent Pustertal with its rustling forests, the fertile Vintschgau and the Sterza basin up to the source of the Eisach: all these are to be torn away from their German motherland and placed under Italian rule! Peace is not yet concluded and, despite the proclamations of the Italians, there is a faint hope that at the peace negotiations the better judgment of the victors may put a check on these disastrous excesses. From Rudi we hear that, even before her entrance into the War, Italy offered to sell her neutrality, demanding as part payment these German territories which she now occupies. At that time the old Emperor Franz Josef, in order to bring this murderous war to a speedy end, would have ceded to the Italians the territories wholly inhabited by Italians, and where only Italian was spoken, but unfortunately all these negotiations were rendered abortive by the stubborn exorbitance of the Italian diplomats, who were backed up by the representatives of the Entente. In my opinion, too little reference is made to the fact that Italy, a member of the Triple Alliance, was guilty of the most flagrant treachery to her allies, Germany and Austria. It seems, however, to be the keynote of this hateful World War that all ordinary notions and sentiments of honour and decency between man and man are simply cast to the winds. Presumably, in preparation for the peace to be concluded, we are to be rendered even more incapable of resistance than we are already. The newspapers report that the Czechs have stores of coal which have caught fire owing to spontaneous combustion; they are, in fact, embarrassed by their enormous stocks of coal, and yet their frontiers are closed against the export of coal to Austria! What can be the reason for such a barbarous decree? Is the sole explanation of this almost perverse closing of the frontier really to be sought in a thirst for revenge inspired by hatred of everything German? Or are these measures designed to break the spirit of the three and a half million Germans who have been forcibly incorporated in the Czech republic and are openly opposed to their conquerors? I don't know. I only know that we housewives, owing to the stoppage of supplies of Czech coal, are plunged in new and serious difficulties. Hungry and underfed as we are, a well-heated room has become more than ever a necessity. Ill-nourished and always half-frozen, we have not the strength to resist infectious diseases, such as influenza, tuberculosis, etc. Our physicians, who have fought so brilliantly and successfully against the war pestilences—plague, cholera, spotted typhus, dysentery, and so forth—are powerless against starvation and cold, which are now threatening the life of the nation. Again and again they have appealed for help in the name of humanity but, up to now, alas! without success. The statistics show that the food conditions in Vienna are impossible. The mortality among adults has increased by more than a third. Among children between one and fifteen years of age the mortality has increased by fifty per cent. Among those suffering from or threatened by tuberculosis the mortality has more than doubled. Prominent scientists and

doctors have pointed out the cruelty of the measures adopted by the Czechs. But we are helpless. The Entente controls the cable service and all means of communication by land and sea. The cry of distress sent up by millions of human beings is smothered and dies away unheard. As if in mockery, Stanek, the Czech Minister, has declared that the full service on their railways has been resumed and that the coal supply is very satisfactory. A priest, who is a member of the Czech Ministry, is said to have personally kept back the coal which was waiting at the stations for despatch to Vienna. Is this fanatical hatred of Germans compatible with Christian love for one's neighbour, such as one might have expected to find in a man wearing priestly vestments? Germany, too, owing to the occupation of Silesia and the Ruhr district, no longer has the disposal of her coal, and therefore cannot come to our aid. We are dependent on Ostrau and Brux. The scanty supplies of coal from the Austrian crown lands are insufficient to meet a twentieth part of Vienna's need. The consequences of Czech cruelty have soon made themselves apparent. The public services, such as power-stations, gasworks, tramways, railways, etc., have been forced, owing to the coal-shortage, to reduce very considerably their output of light, power and heat. We are now only allowed to burn one 25-candle-power electric bulb in the whole flat. We get one candle and $\frac{1}{4}$ litre petroleum per week and household. The use of the gas-heater has been cut down to one hour daily. If the legal allowance of gas exceeded, the supply is ruthlessly cut off. The heating of bath-water by gas is an impossibility, and soap too is becoming more and more difficult to procure. I have to heat up small quantities of water for my large family on the little iron stove or on the small kitchener. We have said good-bye to baths. The offices and shops have been ordered to close at four o'clock in the afternoon. All businesses have been forced to employ demobilised soldiers, no matter whether they need workers or no. The disastrous effect of this unwanted burden, combined with the compulsory closing at 4 p.m., can easily be imagined. Bankruptcies are the order of the day and the krone is depreciating rapidly. Looking through my housekeeping books, I find that in the year 1914 I paid 44 heller for one kilogramme (i.e. 2d. per lb) of the best wheat flour. To-day wheat flour is wholly unobtainable, and the often indefinable mixture which calls itself flour costs, if purchased from an illicit dealer, 22 kronen (i.e. 8s. 4d. per lb). Another result of the terrible shortage of coal is that all places of amusement have had to be closed. The cafes are only allowed to keep open after 8 p.m. on condition of using acetylene lamps, and I, too, have had recourse to this malodorous means of illumination. In order to economise in the street lighting, the gas-lamps are only lit at considerable intervals. The gay, laughing Vienna of years ago now lies wrapped in black mourning after the fall of dusk, and rogues who shun the light take advantage of this fact to commit burglaries and highway robberies. Of course there are still illicit places of amusement with well-lighted and well-heated rooms in some of the private houses, where, without the knowledge of the authorities, the proprietors rake in vast fortunes, until they are tracked down by the police and have to transfer themselves elsewhere. The Italian army of occupation, which, in agreement with the Entente, is entrusted with the supervision of Vienna, is now in a position to convince itself of our terrible need and distress; and the Italian Commander-in-Chief is said to have already demanded a trainload of food supplies for Vienna. I do not share that sentimental adoration of the Italian officers stationed here exhibited so remarkably by some of our population, above all by the women of certain circles; none the less I feel heartily grateful to the Italian Commander-in-Chief for this truly humane suggestion.

DECEMBER 15TH, 1918

WOLFI HAS SCURVY. LIESBETH AT ALLAND. RE-STAMPING OF THE KRONE NOTES. FLIGHT FROM THE KRONE. NO END TO THE ARMISTICE.

Twelve days have passed without my having any opportunity to be alone with my diary. Moreover there is no longer any question of being really alone. In order to be able to occupy ourselves on these long December evenings, we are all forced to sit round the one electric light allowed us. Only Erni, as he himself remarks with bitter irony, suffers less from this than the rest of us. He is independent of light-shortage, and for that reason he always seeks our company. When he still had the sight of his beautiful blue eyes, Erni often liked to be alone. I remember that my husband used to scold him when he wandered about alone and apart from his brothers, absorbed in his thoughts, or sat where he could dream into the blue distances. Now it often seems to me that the poor boy finds it painful to be alone even for a short time. When Liesbeth began to get high temperatures ten days ago, Dr. Hofmann insisted on sending her immediately to the sanatorium at Alland, where she is to have a rest cure. I took her there myself. The sanatorium lies on the southern slope of a wooded height in the midst of the Wienerwald, and has completely cured many Viennese of that plague of big cities, tuberculosis. The doctor, who had been one of my husband's intimate colleagues, gave Liesbeth a very kind welcome, but told us at once that the work of the sanatorium was very much hampered, if not threatened with extinction, owing to the acute coal-shortage. The central-heating furnace can only be stoked with coal and the rooms are not adapted for separate heating. Also the obtaining of food supplies is becoming more and more difficult. A letter received from Liesbeth to-day confirms the fears of the sanatorium doctor, for the institution is really to close down on December 20th, owing to the shortage of coal and food supplies, so that Liesbeth will be home again in a few days. Erni is delighted, for he has missed his sister a great deal. Rudi, who is very much worried about Liesbeth's state of health, rails against the hard-heartedness of the Czechs, which is responsible for all this: "That comes of turning servants in to masters. Up to now the Czechs have been a nation of lackeys, and so they will remain for a long time yet. A servant is a remorseless ruler when he is set in the place of his master." Rudi is not altogether wrong. Formerly the menial class in the Austrian monarchy consisted mainly of Czechs. Czech domestic workers—housemaids, cooks, menservants—were very much sought after, and at Court almost all the lackeys were Czechs. There was only a comparatively small educated Czech middle class in Bohemia and Moravia, and this is now sovereign. Rudi, who is clever with his fingers, has, with the aid of a locksmith, made a pair of quite serviceable aluminium artificial legs, by means of which he is able to move about the room fairly satisfactorily. Now, too, he has invented something that promises to be very helpful to Erni. Erni had always needed someone to write down the notes for him when he was composing, and although Liesbeth and I, and even Edith, were quite well able to do this, Erni's dependence on us obviously worried him. Rudi realised that, under these circumstances, Erni would soon lose all his delight in composing, and he devised a "composition apparatus," as he called it. He made a wooden case with two sets of five parallel grooves, representing the five lines of the bass and treble respectively. In these grooves were wooden notes which could be moved to and fro at will. Erni set his notes in position and Rudi then photographed the apparatus, so that anyone could play the composition from the photograph. Erni was delighted with this contrivance and did not know how to be

grateful enough to Rudi. We all admired Rudi, who, with his innate optimism, would have been not only quite resigned to his present lot, but even hopeful as to the future, had it not been for his grave anxiety concerning Liesbeth's state of health. He had been so pleased when he succeeded in persuading her to go to Alland for a few months. And now our hopes of her speedy and complete recovery are shattered by the closing of Alland. Rudi has got his "caution money," amounting to about 35,000 kronen, which, as an officer, he was obliged to put by when he married, for the purpose of safeguarding his economic position. Now he can do what he likes with this money, for the Republic does not recognise such institutions. Rudi talks of sending Liesbeth to a sanatorium in Switzerland, for he wants to ensure her recovery at any price. But the krone is now worth only 25 Swiss centimes, so we must wait until it improves again. Once peace is concluded, everything is bound to take a turn for the better, and surely we shall not have to wait for this day very much longer. We decided to send Liesbeth to some distant relations, a married couple who have a farm not far from Linz. We are having all kinds of trouble with our paper money now. The six new states which have been split off from the old monarchy began by rigorously closing their frontiers against one another. They have now begun to stamp a new value on the old Austro-Hungarian notes which are in circulation everywhere. We too have been obliged to print "Deutschosterreich" on our paper money, in order to avoid burdening our little country with too large a note circulation. For an enormous amount of money is required for making purchases. This measure naturally excited great alarm among the population. I too was obliged to take to the bank the remainder of the 20,000 kronen, which I had drawn out seven weeks before, and have them stamped. In addition to the necessary and now so costly articles of food, I had been obliged to get shoes for Karl, Erni and Wolfi. These were absolutely unprocurable in Vienna through legitimate channels, and those across the Czech frontier cost 300 to 400 kronen a pair, so that I had only 11,000 kronen left out of the 20,000. I was filled with horror. Nine thousand kronen in seven weeks! Where was it going to end? Would my little fortune suffice to tide us over the period of starvation and cold which the ill-starred Armistice had brought upon us? When would there be a return to normal times, and was it right just to fight for the life and health of my children without regard to the future? Bitter doubts oppressed me as I set out for the bank in order to have my remaining 11,000 kronen stamped. Rudi had asked me to sell 10,000 kronen of his War Loan (he had converted the whole of his 35,000 kronen caution money into War Loan), in order that he might have the money to pay for Liesbeth's stay in Switzerland. On the way to the bank I was struck by the number of pale, ragged children who kept asking me for bread. They were the result of the closing of the schools for lack of coal. As the train service was suspended and there was no other means of conveyance to the centre of the town, I was obliged to make my way to the Herrengasse on foot. There were very few vehicles to be seen in the streets. Here and there a motor car, in which Italian officers or other foreigners were seated. Or one of the elegant royal motor cars familiar to every Viennese and now containing our new rulers. On the other hand, the streets were crowded with people, all of whom looked pale and sickly and were obviously not in a hurry. These were the many who had been thrown out of employment by the closing down of industrial undertakings owing to the coal shortage. The Government has tried to arrange free or cheap dinners for this half-million unemployed. Kitchens and coffee houses have been opened everywhere. As I had to pass one of these places, I went in to see what was being served. The unemployed, upon showing their cards, got a brown liquid described as

coffee and a piece of bread and jam free of charge. They could also get bean soup and a piece of bread. Many betrayed their hunger by the avidity with which they devoured this wretched fare. The rooms were overcrowded, unventilated and unheated except for the heat of the body. The floor and tables were dirty, but so were the people seated there. Just as at the present day only millionaires and war profiteers are in a position to eat their fill and live in heated rooms, so too only millionaires and war profiteers have the wherewithal to be well washed. They are able no doubt to change their linen and have it washed as often as they like. For us housewives with no soap and no hot water, the household washing has already become a problem. I thought of the ten pieces of "household grained soap" which I had procured from a tradesman at a very high price. I was so delighted at having soap in the house again. As this soap still seemed rather moist, Kathi put in on a cupboard to dry. When, the day before yesterday, we wanted to do some washing and went to fetch a piece of this precious possession, we found, in place of the beautiful thick pieces of soap, nothing but thin, misshapen objects, which looked far more like pancakes than soap. The soap was adulterated and diluted in every imaginable way, and, in order to wash my linen, we were obliged to use all ten pieces, which did not behave in the least like soap. Yes, it is easy to make money out of the distress of others. That is what far too many people have discovered at the present day. In the large banking hall a great deal of business was being done and I had to wait some time before I was attended to. All around me animated discussions were in progress concerning the stamping of currency, the issue of new notes, the purchase of foreign money and so on. There were always some who knew exactly what was now the best thing to do! After my money had been stamped, I went to see the bank official who always advised me. "Well, wasn't I right?" he said. "If you had bought Swiss francs when I suggested, you would not now have lost three-fourths of your fortune." "Lost!" I exclaimed in horror. "Why, don't you think the krone will recover again?" "Recover!" he said with a laugh. "Recover!" he repeated, leaning across the oak counter, behind which stood his writing-table. Our krone will go to the devil, that's certain." He had spoken the last sentence very softly, so that the people standing near me could not hear. "Good heavens!" I said, and I must have looked very dismayed. "Will you follow my advice this time, before . . ." he did not finish the sentence. "Come into my room for a moment." He beckoned to a messenger and told him to take me into his room. There he began to explain to me that the monarchy was compelled to issue war loans and that the subscription to these loans was often compulsory. This was done because the State had already used up all its gold reserves and had no money left for carrying on the War. With the money from the war loans the War was continued, but there was practically no cover for the notes at present in circulation. "Just test the promise made on this 20-kronen note and try to get, say, 20 silver kronen in exchange for it," he said, holding out a 20-kronen note. "I know," I said timidly, "that there is no metal money in circulation now. First they gave us iron money instead of nickel and copper, and now they have withdrawn that too. Here I have a whole purse full of notes, all for small amounts. It is impossible to buy anything with them." "There, you see. You have grasped the position already. And now you will understand me when I tell you that at the present time it is well to possess a house or ground or shares in an industry or a mine or something else of the sort, but not to possess any money, or at least no Austrian or German money. Do you understand what I mean?" "Yes, but mine are Government securities; surely there can't be anything safer than that?" I answered. "But, my dear lady, where is the State which guaranteed

these securities to you? It is dead, and do you imagine that its successor will or can take over all the liabilities of its predecessor? That is absolutely out of the question." My head was in a whirl, but as my adviser had been right on the previous occasion, and as, moreover, he was looked upon as an extremely clever business man, I decided to do what he advised me. He gave me an introduction to a friend who had a private banking business and whom he recommended as particularly trustworthy and experienced. This man would exchange my Government securities for corresponding industrial securities. I should, of course, lose money in this transaction, but I should at least have something safe. In reply to my inquiry why I would not do the business through his bank, my adviser told me that the private bank would do it far more cheaply. The big banks had heavy expenses and were obliged to charge more. He telephoned to his friend, and instructed him to buy me the industrial securities which he had suggested. When I told him of Rudi's wish to sell 10,000 kronen worth of War Loan, he shook his head. "War Loan is at the present time unsaleable. No one knows whether it is worth anything at all." Very depressed, alarmed, and utterly at sea owing to my ignorance of banking business, I went home. On the way I saw a woman fall down in the street from exhaustion and this did not contribute to raise my spirits. At home I found Wolfi dissolved in tears. His father had scolded him because he had refused to eat his lunch, which consisted of two dried plums and a boiled egg. Wolfi complained of pains in his mouth, and I thought of toothache, but I noticed that the mucous membrane of his mouth was red and swollen. Rudi regretted his hastiness and said he was afraid that Wolfi had an attack of scurvy, as his experience at the Front had familiarised him with this disease, which was caused by lack of vitamins. During the last stage of the War a number of soldiers had contracted scurvy as a result of living almost entirely on tinned foods. I resolved to take Wolfi at once to the Karolinen Children's Hospital, the head of which was a friend of my husband. Rudi's diagnosis was correct and the doctor reassured me by saying that the attack would soon pass off with proper dieting. But where I could get this diet he was unable to tell me. He thought Wolfi quite passably nourished compared with other children and he showed me little children whose health had been terribly impaired by the food-shortage. I saw a large number of children of 12-14 years of age, whose development had simply been arrested during the war years, so that physically they had the appearance of eight-year-old children. As it is particularly important for children at the age of puberty to be well nourished, the injurious effects of undernourishment were specially noticeable in the case of these children. In other cases tuberculosis had worked terrible havoc as a result of the diminished power of resistance of its victims. The head of the hospital told me that ninety-five per cent of all the children examined by him were seriously undernourished. Of the children born during the war years hardly one was free from rickets, the severest form of which is osteomalacia, or bone-softening, and from the latter a number of elderly people in Vienna were also suffering. Scurvy is at the present time the ordinary disease of infancy, owing to the almost complete lack of fresh milk; and the mothers are too underfed to be able to nurse their children. The mothers whom I saw sitting or standing with their children almost all looked as if they themselves were hospital cases. One six-year-old child was suffering from acute bone-softening. His mother, who had brought him to Vienna to have treatment, told me that the food situation in the rural districts of Upper Austria was no better than in Vienna. Many of the children were so weak that they could only lie in bed until some good Samaritan conveyed them to the hospital. "They are dying like flies in winter," said the woman, "and if things don't get better soon, we shall all die." The doctor is,

unfortunately, helpless in almost every case. He tells his patients, for instance, that they are in urgent need of their invalid's milk ration. He recommends them to the special attention of the authorities. But of what use is that? The Food Minister has officially declared that he does not know where he is going to get the food supplies from January until next August. Milk is only obtainable for children up to one year of age, and even for these the quantity is insufficient—to say nothing of the quality, for in normal times children were never fed on tinned milk. In any case the ration of 1/8 litre (less than ¼ pint) per day is insufficient, and substitutes, such as flour and flour-products, are unobtainable, so that at the present day it is a serious problem to guard an infant against death from starvation. I thought with horror of the time when Liesbeth will be a mother for the second time, seeing that with all my care and pains I have not been able to shield Wolfi against scurvy. The physician told me that forty per cent of all the two-year-old children he had examined this year had lost weight as compared with the previous year. "Why don't we invite doctors and mothers from the Entente countries to come and see the children's hospitals in Vienna? They could then make clear to their leading statesmen and field-m Marshals what a moral responsibility they are incurring by continuing this terrible hunger blockade." In reply to my question the physician handed me a daily newspaper, pointing to a particular paragraph. I read with amazement: "The President of the National Council of Frenchwomen has decided to send a negative reply to the German women who have begged them to intervene for the purpose of alleviating the severe armistice conditions, since, in view of the disloyal methods of waging war adopted by the Central Powers, these conditions were wholly justified." What has become of humanity and love for one's neighbour? Have they been utterly destroyed in this horrible war? The hunger blockade, which is inflicting ever deeper and deeper injuries on the population of our country, is maintained in order to punish us. Yet the bulk of those who have to suffer this heavy punishment are poor helpless beings who were humbly and harmlessly following the path that life had marked out for them. As citizens of their country they were thrust into the War whether they willed it or no. And because of that are these defenceless men, together with their wives and children, to suffer the most brutal punishment even after the War is ended? Your grandson needs vitamins, gnädige Frau, then he will soon be all right again. Fresh vegetables, fresh milk, fresh fruit," said the physician, and he stretched out his hand to bid me good-bye. On the way home I reflected what was to be done now, and how I could procure the necessary vitamins for Wolfi. Fruit was practically unobtainable in Vienna. One saw it in a few delikatessen shops, where quite ordinary apples were sold at exorbitant prices. This was owing to the difficulties of transport. Goods traffic was almost entirely suspended as a result of the coal shortage. There were no motor lorries available, and the farmers had no inducement to drive into the Vienna market, since they had none too much for themselves and would no longer supply anything for money. They used their fruit for making spirit or fed their pigs on it. But necessity is the mother of invention. Years ago, when I accompanied my husband on a visit to England in connection with his medical studies, I brought back some English cress-seed, which the English housewives use to grow cress for their daily requirements. I sowed cress in all the available flower-pots, and when the first plants were ready I was delighted to find that Wolfi enjoyed them. Some cod liver oil, which I had meanwhile succeeded in procuring, also helped matters, and now Wolfi is well again and has a vegetable garden to look after in addition to his hen and rabbit farm.

DECEMBER 23RD, 1918

Since November 27th, the evening on which Karl objected so vehemently to Erni's "dabbling with music" and distressed us all by his whole conduct, a certain tension had subsisted between us and Karl which not even Edith's tactful and soothing influence could alleviate. I had secretly hoped that Karl's communistic attitude was only a transitory and perhaps even a natural result of all the privation and misery he had endured in the trenches, and that after he had been some time with his family in the home where he had spent his youth, the old traditions would gain the ascendancy in his heart. Unfortunately, this was not the case. It seemed to me, indeed, as if the close and constant companionship of his family, inevitable under present conditions, had intensified Karl's antagonism. All that he had once respected and valued—the fruits of his education, the memory of his father—seemed to have been erased from his memory, or at any rate, buried beneath a mountain of fantastic political projects. Formerly of a thoroughly good-natured, rather docile disposition, Karl had become harsh, impatient and quarrelsome. I had discussed this great change with the other members of the family and with Edith, and we were all of opinion that the head wound, though it appeared to have healed satisfactorily, was mainly responsible. Rudi and Erni were inclined to think that Arenstamm was exercising a disastrous influence on Karl and perpetually inciting him against us "bourgeois." I begged Rudi, Liesbeth and Erni to be tactful and patient with him, but Rudi and Erni were of opinion that too great forbearance would make the relations between us worse rather than better. We agreed that Edith should be asked to persuade Karl to respect our views so long as he lived with us, and avoid all disapproving comments and polemics, just as we, too, would all avoid anything that might irritate or provoke him. My conversation with Edith failed to achieve anything. Edith told me that she, too, was grieved by the change in Karl, and that a few days ago, in a discussion with her father, Karl had expressed himself in such violent terms as to cause a complete breach between the two men. She now found herself in the very difficult position of having to decide between keeping faith with her lover or obeying her father, who had insisted that she should break off her engagement immediately. The brave, honourable girl, who had been silently bearing the pain of this quarrel for some days, was on the brink of despair. Her father, a Colonel of the Vienna Haus-regiment, and Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, is sprung from an old family of officers, and though a pleasant companion in casual social intercourse, he has all the ingrained and engrafted virtues and failings of his caste. He is as intolerant of other people's opinions as Karl has now, to our regret, become, and I am not at all surprised that a clash of the diametrically opposite views of these two men should produce sparks. Edith is tenderly loved by her father after his fashion. He looks upon her as a precious inheritance from his wife, who died young and is said to have been fair and gentle like her daughter. Edith knew her mother only from portraits and from her father's descriptions. Although brought up under the care of a good-natured aunt, she had, as she confessed to me long after we became acquainted, never ceased to yearn for her mother. This circumstance, no doubt, was largely responsible for the rapid development of affectionate relations between us, as Edith declared with loving enthusiasm that I was in her eyes "the pattern for all mothers who took their duty seriously." As I have no difficulty in sympathising with the joys and sorrows of the younger generation, I have been successful in maintaining relations of friendship between myself and my children. Edith is a shrewd and sensitive observer, and has adopted as her rule in life the beautiful motto: "To understand all is to forgive all." A few days ago she protested in her gentle, tactful way, when

Karl declared in her presence that the older generation—by whom he meant myself—all wore blinkers and were incapable of seeing, and still less of understanding, the rapid changes and improvements of our age. Edith said: "You do not know your Mother if you can say such a thing. Mother is a happy blend of the quiet wisdom of age with the quick intelligence and resolution of youth." Whereupon Karl, a little ashamed, muttered: "Perhaps Mother is an exception, but she, too, is full of prejudices." I have wandered from the point and must now return to Edith, who in her despair leant against my shoulder, sobbing violently. "Tears cloud the vision and exaggerate the misfortune from which we are suffering. A grown-up person giving way unrestrainedly to his or her tears is suffering much the same emotions as a weeping child. I saw in Edith a weeping child, who must be treated with the same caution and objectivity as other weeping children, when their little souls are afflicted by some misfortune. Angry, defiant tears should be promptly suppressed or else left to cry themselves out; but tears shed in pain call for sympathy and consolation. It is possible, if one has the gift, to enter into the pain of others. I saw that a conflict was being waged in Edith's soul between filial attachment, on the one hand, and loyalty to her betrothed on the other. I saw that the one sentiment counter-balanced the other, and that for the time being it was only a struggle between two mutually incompatible obligations that was tormenting her. I had to find out very tactfully whether Edith's love for Karl was still strong enough to outweigh, and possibly thrust permanently into the background, her devotion to her father. The violence of Edith's sobbing subsided.

Still I said nothing, but only stroked her fair silky hair. She was the first to speak. "Mother, you understand me. Help me!" Edith's appeal for help touched me to the heart. "I understand you, my child, and I will help you as well as I can. Sit down and listen to me!" I had taken Edith into my bedroom, which contained Erni's and Wolfi's beds as well as my own. There I seated myself on the small, cretonne-covered sofa which separated Erni's bed from mine, and made Edith sit down beside me. As the temperature of the room was very low, I gave Edith a large woollen wrap and put on my own winter jacket. It was forbidden by legal decree to heat rooms after four o'clock and our oil stove was in use in the common sitting-room. "I will help you as well as I can," I repeated. "In order to alleviate or get rid of a sorrow, an illness or any other vexation, one must first be clear as to its cause. Our reason is very often, consciously or unconsciously, governed by our feelings, and we are often quite content to let ourselves be guided by the latter. Yet in doubtful cases—for instance, in such a case as yours—we ought first to appeal to our reason. Cold, sober reason must give us the true facts concerning the conflict in your emotions. Then we shall also be able to find the right solution of your trouble." "Oh, Mother," said Edith, seizing my hand gratefully, "I knew that you would help me." "And now," I said, "you must answer my questions quite frankly and without any sort of shyness." "Yes, Mother, just ask me." And the look in her candid blue eyes told me that I should not need to subject her to a long and detailed cross-examination. And now I put my questions, the first of which was aimed straight at the heart of the matter. "Do you love Karl as much now as you did at the time when you became engaged?" By love, out of the many and various notions comprised under the term, I meant that purely psychological, ideal love, which prepares the way to the physical union of two human beings. Such a love is as a rule expressed in excessively enthusiastic terms and is deaf to any rational criticism. To the best of my observation, the betrothal between Karl and Edith had originated from such a love, based only on purely idealistic notions. If Edith's love

for Karl had not undergone any change, Edith's answer would be brief and emphatic. It was not. Edith replied evasively. She said that hitherto she had believed that her love for Karl was strong enough to overcome every obstacle until their marriage. A year ago, at the time of their betrothal, Karl had been a different person. Up to now she had tried in vain to fight against this alteration. Karl was often domineering and obstinate with her. The very circumstance that this change in his nature was thought to be the result of his head wound, aggravated the conflict in her heart. The wound was also perhaps responsible for the fact that Karl's love for her had assumed a more violent and passionate form. Karl, who was always harsh and unyielding towards himself, probably suffered in silence more than he was willing to let us see. Edith, in her steadfast sense of duty, concluded that now above all she ought to stand by Karl and try to help him regain the mental poise which he seemed to have lost. For at the present time separation from her would be more than he could bear. Now I had the answer to my question. Karl had quite alienated Edith by his altered disposition. It was not love but supreme unselfishness that prevented her from giving him up. I had listened to Edith's explanation in silence. Now I put my second question: "And your father?" "I shall try to explain to my father that I cannot and will not break off my engagement to Karl at this moment. At the same time I shall promise him that I will gradually try to bring our engagement to an end and that I will never consent to adopt Karl's political views." "And if your father refuses to give way?" "Then I shall leave him to his obstinacy and do what I think right. Now tell me, Mother, whether you approve my point of view, for I want to follow your advice." I had nothing more to advise. Edith had once more given proof of her faculty of clear and energetic thought and action. I was only apprehensive in one respect: I could not quite conceive how she would gradually break off her engagement to Karl, and yet, as Karl's mother and in view of Karl's overstrained nervous condition, I could not but be grateful to her for her consideration in avoiding a sudden breach just now. At the same time I saw the dangers which might arise for both of them as a result of Edith's well-meant plan of releasing herself from her engagement gradually. As at the moment, however, I had no better advice to offer, I could only concur with Edith and promise to help her in every possible way.

DECEMBER 25TH, 1918

CHRISTMAS AS IT WAS AND AS IT IS NOW

Christmas, 1918, and still no "peace on earth"! On the contrary, a recent extension of the Armistice without any raising of the blockade, i.e., without improving the food and fuel conditions for millions of hungry and freezing persons. A few "Christmas presents" for us poor harassed Vienna housewives, such as the cutting off of the electric heat, complete stoppage of the gas supply, discontinuance of the tram service, and suspension of the railway traffic. Christmas, 1918, is not a "merry Christmas" for the people of Vienna! I turned over the pages of my diary and found the last Christmas festival before the terrible World War—December, 1913. How many things have happened in these last years! The official lists of casualties for the Central Powers and the Entente give the total number of dead as seven and a half million! The number of those who have returned from the Front wounded or invalids for the rest of their lives is as difficult to determine by statistics as the number of civilians of the Hinterland who have perished owing to the consequences of the War and the present ravages of the Armistice. If these are set down as two and a half million this will certainly not be too high an estimate. On

the 24th of December, 1913, ten million men, for the most part young and healthy, celebrated a happy Christmas festival. The greater part of these are now dead. At the best they have returned to their homes from the trenches crippled and maimed in body and soul. Ten million men! Where, among all the gruesome wars of antiquity, the Middle Ages or modern times, is there anything that compares with these horrors of the World War? Ten million men celebrated the Christmas festival of 1913 without the faintest foreboding of the terrible future which they were inevitably approaching. A philosopher once said that if man had the power to see into the future he would reject life as not worth living. I do not share this opinion and my inextinguishable optimism induces me to believe that, in spite of all, almost everyone would make the attempt to live his or her life. But it is well that fate has denied us the prophetic gift of gazing into the future. Having read through the pages of my diary referring to Christmas, 1913, I propose to avoid any tedious comparisons by simply setting side by side the facts as they were then and as they are now.

Then: A silver fir as high as the room, eagerly and tastefully decorated by my four children and bearing seventy little white wax candles. Now: A meagre little fir tree, hardly as high as the table, procured with difficulty in exchange for some expensive cigars. Hung with decorations preserved from pre-war days, but only lit with a few unsightly tallow stumps cut from one of the rationed candles.

Then: Eleven persons at a well-furnished and decorated table: My husband, Aunt Bertha, Rudi, Liesbeth, Karl, Otto, Erni, two of my husband's unmarried assistants, a Professor at the Academy of Music, my husband's best friend, and myself, eagerly and happily intent upon making the evening as enjoyable as possible for everyone. Now: Of the above-mentioned happy and unsuspecting company: four dead, three disabled and two ill.

Then: After playing and singing the lovely Christmas carol, "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht," and distribution of gifts at a Christmas tree radiant with candles, a cheerful evening meal in a well-lit and well-heated dining-room. Now: To-day, too, we sang the Christmas carol, "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht," accompanied by Liesbeth's violin and by blind Erni at the piano. Edith's lovely voice mingled with Wolfi's childish treble, but Wolfi was to-day probably the only one among us who looked forward to the coming distribution of gifts with eager excitement. To the rest of us the old carol had a melancholy ring, like an echo from happier days. Karl, who regarded the Christmas festival as an absurd and insipid survival from a past age, left us to attend a political meeting.

Then: The traditional Vienna Christmas menu: Fried carp with potatoes and bean salad, and a poppy and nut pancake concocted with special care. With it beer and light Moselle wine.

Afterwards, punch, pastries and fruit. Now: Christmas was accompanied by a sharp frost and icy winds. The little iron stove, even supplemented by the oil stove, could not bring the temperature of the room above eleven degrees Reaumur. We were therefore all obliged to wrap ourselves up warmly so that there was no question of festival attire. Liesbeth in particular suffers from the low temperature of the rooms. The smoking candles on the Christmas tree and the acetylene lamp which lit our sitting-room so poisoned the atmosphere that I advised Liesbeth to go to bed early in her unheated but well aired room. Although our rabbit farm could easily have supplied us with meat we adhered to the traditional meatless Christmas supper. The preparation of the Christmas menu was fraught with difficulties. At a great pecuniary sacrifice I bought a few Portuguese sardines at an exorbitant price. In Vienna there is even now a great

deal of talk about Christmas carp, as everyone likes to revive the memory of the Vienna Christmas carp festivities, but for ordinary mortals, among whom I count myself, carp is absolutely unobtainable. Possibly a millionaire or a war profiteer, or someone more ingenious than myself in procuring rare delicacies, may have succeeded in procuring this Christmas dainty, smuggled across the Czech frontier from the numerous carp ponds of Bohemia which used to supply Vienna. We were obliged to content ourselves with sardines, with which I was able to serve the Christmas present from the Swedish Relief Organisation: four ounces of rice each. A good loaf baked by the farmer's wife at Laxenburg and presented to me as a Christmas gift, together with eight ounces of butter, heightened the enjoyment of what was to us an unusually varied supper. I had long since resigned myself to the fact that at table the conversation was concerned almost exclusively with food: with the food that was unprocurable and the food that might possibly be procured; with novel dishes prepared from inadequate substitutes; and with the efforts required in order to obtain the most necessary articles of food. For years in our own and every other household these things had formed the ordinary and almost exclusive topic of conversation—a sufficient proof of the pitiful daily anxieties concerning our food supplies which weighed upon us all. The fact that, in order to save soap, which has long since become a luxury article of the first rank, we sit round a table covered only with oilcloth and without serviettes, for even paper serviettes have become unobtainable, is only a trifling circumstance at a time when lack of the most primitive household requirements is the order of the day.

Then: My husband gave Liesbeth and myself, as usual, a small piece of jewellery. I received an artistically wrought gold brooch, and Liesbeth a pretty gold pendant for her bracelet. Karl, Otto and Erni each received something for which they had been heard to express a special wish in the course of the year. Karl and Otto got pairs of skis, while Erni had asked to have money. Aunt Bertha received one of the latest books, and each of the guests some simple but carefully chosen gift. Now: Wishes enough and to spare, but even those which seem absurdly modest measured by peace standards are unrealisable to-day. Liesbeth is expecting her second child in four months' time; with the craving for certain articles of food peculiar to pregnant women, she wants a stick of chocolate. Up to now I have not succeeded in satisfying this wish. As the Czech shoes which I bought for Karl, Erni and Wolfi at such a heavy pecuniary sacrifice were not water-tight, necessity made me inventive, and out of an old solid leather trunk and an armchair upholstered in calf, our shoemaker—who can only work if he is supplied with the materials—manufactured three pairs of quite presentable water-tight shoes, which I set on the Christmas table for Karl, Erni and Wolfi. Karl, who was still wearing his old uniform and whose own civilian clothes were too tight for him, received one of my husband's suits which had been altered to fit him. As Karl refused to take any part in our Christmas festivities, I handed him the suit and the shoes before he left the house, but they did not appear to afford him any special pleasure. Wolfi also received a pair of mitten gloves lined with rabbit-skin, which I had made for him myself out of some scraps of material. Aunt Bertha, whose health underwent a noticeable improvement during the first weeks of her stay with us, had been bedridden again for some days. I got her a few second-hand books, with which she was very delighted. My present to Rudi consisted of a few tools, since he always manages to make himself useful in the house with repairs and all kinds of improvements, and also invents and makes toys for Wolfi. Since Rudi learnt that it was impossible to sell his War Loan at the moment he has been very depressed. As it is doubtful whether he will receive his pay, and the pension to disabled soldiers is absurdly

small, he talks of earning money in some way. I thoroughly approve of this aspiration and have promised to help him. Edith left us immediately after supper as she did not want her father to be alone. Karl had asked her to go with him to his friends, but she refused on the plea that she was not interested in politics and did not wish to concern herself with them. Wolfi, who was the most cheerful and contented of us all, was particularly delighted with a jig-saw puzzle which his father had made for him. When I sent him to bed he thanked me eagerly for the beautiful Christmas Day. The poor little fellow knew no better, for our really beautiful Christmas Days he had been too young to enjoy or remember. When Edith left us, and Liesbeth and Wolfi retired to bed, I stayed up for a little while with Erni and Rudi. I had said nothing to anyone about my conversation with Edith, as the latter had particularly asked me not to betray her relations with Karl. It was Erni who again and again wanted to know whether Edith was prepared to tell Karl the truth quite frankly. He also constantly referred to the training of Edith's voice and was delighted when Edith, in order to please him, sang a few songs to his accompaniment. "If you can't persuade Karl to let me give you singing lessons, I shall ask him myself." Edith begged him to be patient and reminded him of Karl's wound, for which we ought all to make allowances. Erni, who is already able to find his way about the flat with the greatest ease, accompanied Edith to the door. Then he came back to the sitting-room where I and Rudi were seated at the dining-table, with its glaring, ill-smelling acetylene lamp. Erni threw himself into the armchair and rested his head on his hands. All the immense, ineffable sadness which grips the heart of anyone who looks towards the future with fear and mistrust lay heavy upon all three of us. In the bitter years that have passed misfortune has swept over us like a devastating hurricane. Summoning up all our strength, we sought for some firm support to which we could cling. I found this support in my children's need of my help. Rudi, after he had—though not without moments of bitter agony—resigned himself to being a cripple, found this support in his courageous facing of life and joy in his work. In the days of our common sufferings, I had learnt to appreciate him as a man of sterling worth and goodness. Optimism, which in his case frequently found expression in a rather boisterous gaiety, formed the basis of his character, as it did of my own. As with me, this natural optimism was never entirely dispelled or crushed. Like an inexhaustible spring, even if obstructed for a time by the rubble and slime of life, it found its way back to the surface. With Erni it is quite a different matter. Erni has borne his wound bravely but always in the firm conviction that the loss of his sight is only temporary. The kindly professor at the Eye Clinic had hitherto made Erni come to him every fortnight. He had infused courage into him and had not robbed him of the hope of seeing again. The last time that we went there together—it was a few days ago—the professor told Erni that only an operation might possibly restore his sight. There could be no question of this operation, however, before the expiry of a year. He begged Erni to be patient and to consider me. He advised him, with a tinge of bitter though well-meant humour, just to continue accustoming himself to a blind existence and then to come back next year. Erni at first received this announcement with great composure, but when we reached home he succumbed to a violent nervous crisis, which was succeeded by a mood of dull apathy and deep depression. He could not be persuaded to leave his bed or to take food. When anyone tried to speak to or console him, he begged them not to torment him but to leave him alone. This condition lasted for three whole days. Not until my own nerves too gave way at the sight of my blind, helpless, despairing child and found relief—I am ashamed to say—in a violent fit of sobbing, did Erni's love struggle heroically towards me

through a melancholy that had finally reached the point of disgust with life. Now it was he who consoled me and begged me to forgive him, and who promised not to make it more difficult for me to look after him. He had, however, continued taciturn and melancholy ever since he learnt that the terrible darkness which surrounded him was to last still longer. We encouraged him to play the piano and to compose, and he obeyed us silently, as if he had pledged himself not to resist and to fulfil our every wish; and it was this docility which touched us all and alarmed me. Rudi saw my eyes resting anxiously on Erni and broke the silence: "Mother, this Christmas evening has not given all of us what we hoped and desired. But next Christmas we shall celebrate in real peace. We shall be able to eat what we like and work as we like. For the fact that, in spite of everything, this Christmas evening too has been beautiful, we have only you to thank, and therefore, in the name of the whole family I say now with all my heart to the bravest of all mothers: "May God reward you! " He stretched out his hand to me across the table and I grasped it. Erni heaved a deep sigh: "Mother, I too thank you for everything!" "Children," I said, "you make me ashamed. Everything I have done is a matter of course." "I know, Mother. You would give me your eyes if you could," said Erni. I reflected for a moment. Then I replied: "Not both, Erni. You would have to be content with one." "Oh, Mother, only to see, only to see again! My God! When will that be, and will it ever be?" The Professor really wanted to try this operation on Erni, although he told me that he had very little hope of success. But this faint hope did help me to preserve my optimism with Erni, and when I told him that I firmly believed he would be cured and only begged him to endure this great trial bravely, he stepped up to me and said, seizing and stroking my hand, now roughened with housework: "Mother, I too, mean to believe that I shall be cured." Then he bade us good-night. Rudi and I discussed our present situation and were agreed that now, when things seemed worst, not one of us must lose heart. "Misfortune is like a beast of prey. So long as one looks it straight in the eyes, one can master it, but if one falters or stumbles, one is lost." After I had helped Rudi into his wheelchair and lit a stump of candle for each of us at the acetylene lamp before putting it out, I accompanied Rudi to his bedroom door and opened it for him. I pushed his wheel-chair cautiously into the room so as not to disturb Liesbeth, who was already fast asleep. Rudi is already able to dress and undress himself unaided, as well to fix on his artificial legs. I stole back to my room very quietly so that I should not wake Erni and Wolfi. Cautiously I crept into my bed and heard Erni sigh painfully several times. I folded my hands and prayed to God to give me strength to bear all my burdens.

JANUARY 1ST, 1919

NO PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. NO SERVANTS. NO LIGHT. NO HEAT. NO FOOD

For us housewives the War seems to have only just begun. It has a stout ally, namely, panic. It is said that the French mean to decimate the German population; also that the terrible Armistice is to remain in force, and that in three more months we shall all have died of hunger. Panic bids defiance to all legal decrees. Even the most respectable of Austrian citizens now breaks the law, unless he is prepared to starve for the sake of obeying it. On December 27th of last year, i.e., four days ago, the first food train arrived in Vienna from Switzerland. The Swiss are the first to substitute humanity for their war-time neutrality towards us. The food which arrived by this train is to be employed by the Government for maintaining half the ration-card allowances during the coming week. The prices of these foodstuffs are, owing to the depreciation of the

krone, four times as high as the previous official prices, but the quality is better. Moreover, it is now practically impossible to get any but the rationed foodstuffs for money, the illicit trade consisting almost exclusively of barter transactions, so that all the housewives welcome the opportunity of once more procuring pure sugar, a little cocoa, chocolate and good rice. Unfortunately the share of the individual in the contents of this charitable relief train is very small. We, for instance, for the eight members of our household, got a total weight of just over three pounds of all the above-mentioned foodstuffs. But we were pleased and grateful none the less, and appreciate the humanity of the honest Swiss, who, let us hope, have set a good example to the Entente. Liesbeth is particularly delighted, for she got the little tablet of chocolate for which she had been longing, though she insisted that each of us should taste a small piece of it. Wolfi was very amusing over this chocolate, which was the first he had tasted in the six years of his life, and I was very glad that he did not think it particularly nice, for Heaven knows when I should have been able to get it for him again. The fact that Switzerland has barred her frontiers against Austrians and Germans in search of work has been adversely criticised by many people here, but I can appreciate the necessity for this measure, for if all our unemployed here were to take refuge in her territory Switzerland would be overrun with superfluous workers and her own would suffer in consequence. Neither Switzerland nor the regions belonging to the Entente and occupied by the Entente troops allow Austrian and German travellers or those in search of work to cross their frontiers. Moreover, the fact that the future is so uncertain has led to a great stagnation in industry and public works; and this again has enormously swelled the number of unemployed. As these unemployed are supported by the State, and, in addition, if they feel any inclination to work, make money by casual labour, we have here in Vienna the remarkable situation that, with half a million unemployed, it is at present impossible to get domestic servants or indeed any sort of workers. If at the present day one of those described as "needing work" does declare himself willing to take a job, his demands are so preposterously high that one gives up trying to negotiate with the "needing work"s. This grotesque fact is the result of the heightened class-consciousness which is daily being instilled into the manual workers by the Socialist Government, and, in heads bewildered by catchwords, leads to an enormously exaggerated estimate of the value of manual labour. Only in this way could it come about that the wages of manual workers are now far higher than the salaries of intellectual workers. Even our otherwise honest old house-porter is demanding such extravagant sums for performing little jobs that I prefer to do the heavier and more unpleasant household work with Kathi's help. Kathi has not let herself be infected or bewildered by the socialistic innovations. She laughed when I told her that there were no longer any servant girls and mistresses, but only "domestic helps" or employees and employers. Moreover, since the 8-hour day has been introduced for "domestic helps" and Kathi starts her work at 7 o'clock in the morning, I told her that, according to the new law, she had the right to refuse to do any more work after 4 o'clock in the afternoon. She might, however, work up to 6 o'clock if she took two hours' rest during the day. "Good Heavens, gnä Frau," exclaimed Kathi, after I had told her about her new rights, "then the ladies will not keep servants any more." Kathi was also visited by representatives of the socialistic organisation of "domestic helps," who questioned her as to the treatment she received from me and informed her of her new rights. As Kathi gave me a splendid testimonial, I was not troubled any more. But one question I should like to address to these very praiseworthy protectors of the servant class: Who is going to

secure an 8-hour day for the poor, harassed Vienna housewives, with their exhausting and responsible duties? The procuring of food is becoming more and more difficult. In order to obtain the rationed bread and pickled cabbage, the only foodstuffs which are still regularly distributed, though in very small quantities, Kathi has to stand in a queue for hours. The official meat ration according to the food cards is 12 dekagrammes (about 4 ounces) per head and week. Every other week the eating of meat is officially forbidden. Game, poultry and fish may be eaten on meatless days, but these are only obtainable in very small quantities and at extortionate prices through illicit trade channels. The fact that these attractive species of meat are not controlled by the State is sufficient proof that the possibilities of procuring them are so slight that they do not interest our card-producing foster-fathers. Food cards I have in plenty. Lying in my writing-table drawer is a whole pack of unredeemed cards. They are unfulfilled promises made by the State. I recall the remark of my bank adviser: "Just try to exchange a 20-kronen note for 20 kronen in silver or gold." I survey my remaining 1,000-kronen notes, lying by the side of my food cards in the writing-table drawer; they do not lie there long, for one after another disappears into the vortex of trade with alarming rapidity. I survey them mistrustfully. Will not they perhaps share the fate of the unredeemed food cards, if the State fails to keep the promise made in the inscription on every note? The State still accepts its own money for the scanty provisions it offers us. The private tradesman already refuses to sell his precious wares for money and demands something of real value in exchange for them. The wife of a doctor whom I know recently exchanged her beautiful piano for a sack of wheat flour. I, too, exchanged my husband's gold watch-chain for four sacks of potatoes, which will at all events carry us through the winter. My friend at Laxenburg made her husband bring me this precious food when he drove to Vienna. This is a risky thing to do at the present time, when everyone claims the right to requisition any non-rationed provisions which he finds in private possession. The farmer, however, as a producer, is allowed to keep larger stocks, though from these he is constantly being called upon to furnish supplies to the Government. My farmer had hidden the sacks of potatoes under straw on top of which he placed some apples. The apples were duly stolen, but the potatoes reached me safely. . Using every possible precaution, we transported the potatoes into the cellar, but to guard against betrayal by other inmates of the house, I had to give our porter half a sack as hush-money. The farmer, who came into our flat to warm himself, devoured his good country bread spread with lard and drank a glass of plum brandy. I introduced him to Rudi and Erni and expressed my appreciation of his help. When his eyes rested on the beautiful grand piano at which Erni was seated, improvising, he took me aside and said: "My wife has been wanting one of those things for a long time. If you'll give it me, you shall have all you want for three months." I declined this suggestion with such horror that the honest countryman was amazed : "Come, isn't it better to eat your fill than to have a bit of music? But just as you like." As I was afraid that I had annoyed him, I tried to appease him with a few good cigars and was apparently successful. When I told Rudi and Erni about this proposal after the farmer had left us, they were both indignant at his presumption, and Rudi declared that the egoism of the peasant class, which is extolled as being so healthy, is gradually assuming revolting forms, as he had already had sufficient opportunity to observe during the War. I soothed Rudi's vexation and explained to him how greatly I needed these people and that I did not even recoil from humbling myself before them for the sake of four sacks of potatoes. "All

for our sake," said Erni, "for Mother doesn't find it easy to bear humiliation!" "All for my own sake," I retorted. "For if things are better for you, they are better for me too."

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Prices rise from day to day, so that the State has been obliged to put 10,000-kronen notes into general circulation. 10,000 kronen—that is equivalent to two years' income from my capital. Never before have I had a note for so large an amount. Nor had I ever dreamed it possible that one could purchase so little for 10,000 kronen. Rudi, on the strength of his knowledge of foreign languages (he knows English, French and Italian) intends to look for a post as correspondent in a bank. But he has no civilian clothes. From an illicit dealer I procured a piece of material for a suit. Our old tailor undertook to make it up. The material is of inferior quality, but, with the making, the suit will cost 1,200 kronen. In pre-war times a first-class suit cost 200 kronen. This represents a six-fold increase of price. Yet for some things, particularly for foodstuffs, prices have risen a hundred-fold and two hundred-fold. The following are a few examples of present-day prices :

The ration of fat per head is 4 dekagrammes (about 1½ ounces) weekly: that is to say, practically nothing.

Fat from the illicit dealers costs 150 to 200 kronen per kilogramme (or about £3 to £4 per lb.).

Butter, which is only obtainable through illicit channels, costs 200 to 250 kronen per kilogramme (or about £4 to £5 per lb.).

Beef and corned beef, also only obtainable through illicit channels, cost 80 to 120 kronen per kilogramme (or about £1 13s. to £2 10s. per lb.)

Very bad Hungarian or Czech sausages, also only through illicit channels, cost 90 to 120 kronen per kilogramme (or about £11 8s. to £2 10s. per lb.).

As linen and dress materials, equally with woollen articles and shoes, are unobtainable, paper clothes are being sold. A paper suit costs 300 to 400 kronen (or about £12 10s. to £16 10s.).

JANUARY 17 TH, 1919

HERE AND THERE A NOTE OF HUMANITY. WILSON IN PARIS. THE TORTURES OF THE ARMISTICE CONTINUE.

Our newspapers report that the English Press has contained protests against the continued cruel delay of peace negotiations and appeals for an alleviation of the blockade. The Daily News has declared that it is in the interests of the allies to improve food conditions in Germany and Austria and to supply them with raw materials. This newspaper does not yet dare to make its demand in the interests of humanity, but it does dare to make it, and that at the present day, when the victors are blinded by chauvinism and hatred, is already a great deal. On January 13th (a date which, according to my one superstition, contains within itself, in the number 13, the seed of misfortune) the first Peace Conference met in Paris. In the meantime, within the frontiers of the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy, three wars are being waged: the Czech campaign against the Germans in Bohemia and Moravia and against the Slovak-Hungarian Komitats, and the Serbian invasion of the Alpine regions, where the Carinthians have up to now, by dint of heroic efforts, succeeded in resisting alien rule. In defiance of Wilson's points referring to the freedom and self-determination of nations, Germans, Hungarians and

Bulgarians are being treated with brutal violence. Millions of Germans have been placed under Czech, Polish, Roumanian, Serbian and Italian rule. As the child of German parents I have always felt myself a German, without being conscious of any national arrogance or intolerance. Now, since we Germans have lost the War, an excessive national pride has grown up in my heart. The fact that now, regardless of the right of self-determination, millions of Germans are to come under the alien rule of the small Slavonic races rouses in me a burning sense of injustice. I recognise the good qualities of these little Slavonic peoples, whether they be Serbs, Roumanians, Czechs or Poles. Each of them may possess excellent national qualities, but where culture and civilisation are concerned not one of them can compare with the Germans. All of them have looked to the Germans more or less as their teachers. The Czechs in particular have learnt and gained a great deal from the culture of pre-war Austria. But they have not yet learnt enough to justify them in subduing three and a half million Germans to their rule. But of what use is it for my national pride to revolt at this thought. We Germans are disarmed and weakened by hunger. We are dependent at the present time upon the magnanimity of the Entente, a magnanimity which, in connection with the cruel prolongation of the Armistice, is conspicuous by its absence. Mr. Hoover, who was sent by President Wilson to Germany in order to study the food situation there and in Austria, has declared that the alleviation of the famine conditions in these two countries is far beyond America's powers. In Vienna the Save-the-Children Fund and the Society of Friends have founded organisations which are devoting themselves to the relief and assistance of children and invalids. Thanks to these two relief schemes, conducted by generous American and English men and women, Wolfi, Liesbeth and Aunt Bertha are once more receiving the tinned milk of which they had been so long deprived.' The Argentine, too, is organising a big relief scheme for the distribution of food and clothing to the most needy. The news that President Wilson is to attend the Peace Conference in Paris rekindled our hopes of a tolerable peace at a time when we were reduced almost to despair by the inhumanity of the Armistice. "Wilson will put matters right," say the optimists. "He will insist on the observance of his Fourteen Points." We waited eagerly for the good news which Wilson would send us from Paris. Wilson said in his address to the victorious Powers : "The task of those who are gathered here is greatly simplified by the fact that they are the masters of no one; they are the servants of mankind." Here, once more, Wilson the idealist was speaking, with his unshakable faith in human altruism. Unfortunately, he left Paris earlier than he intended, depressed and disheartened by the obstinacy of the European victors. He refused to be a party to the dismemberment of the Central Powers, and it must have been a bitter blow to his pride and his sense of justice when at Paris he was told politely but firmly that his Fourteen Points were of no importance in connection with the peace negotiations. His humane and natural wish that the blockade should be raised was also disregarded. Thus the hope which we set on Wilson has been scattered to the winds. But if only peace would come at last and bring us certainty as to our fate and the end of the hunger blockade! But the hearts of the European victor States are hard, and their ears are deaf to our repeated entreaties that peace should at length be concluded. The fact that here in Vienna we have not yet all died of starvation is due to the benevolence of private civilian circles in America, England, Italy, Switzerland, Holland and Sweden. We are living literally on charity or on imports of food for which the State guarantees payment and which is distributed among the population in exchange for money. An English relief train has just arrived. In making a formal presentation of the contents to the Mayor,

Major Bethall remarked that they represented the thanks of the English people for the humane treatment accorded to British prisoners-of-war in Austria. It is pleasant to hear this after all the calumny which has been heaped upon us. An Italian food train was held up on the Brenner owing to an avalanche. The result has been that the official bread ration is cut down to one half. In pre-war times Vienna's consumption of bread per head and day was 15-16 dekagrammes (about 5-6 ounces). At the present time we get 25 dekagrammes (about 9 ounces) per head and week, and even this quantity is dependent on supplies from abroad which we owe to the generosity of foreign citizens. Such a state of things is unendurable and is a tremendous tax on the nerves of the harassed population who are in constant danger of losing their mental poise as well. Discontent, revolt and pillage are rife everywhere. The Spartacists in Berlin are trying to get control of the city. Only after six days of street fighting did the Government succeed in quelling this revolt. At Linz, the capital of Upper Austria, almost all the shops have been plundered. The new National Government does not check this plundering; the soldiers of the Volkswehr place themselves on the side of the offenders by protecting the plundering mob. Liesbeth, who has been staying with my relations for about three weeks, has been an eye-witness of the terrible devastation wrought in Linz and the neighbourhood by people rendered frantic by hunger and privation. My cousin's small but admirably managed farm is about half an hour's drive from Linz, further up the Danube. The normal railway traffic to Linz is suspended, so my cousin, when he joyfully agreed to my request that he should take charge of Liesbeth for a few weeks, arranged with the Captain for Liesbeth to travel on a steam-tug from Passau. Liesbeth reached Linz by this steamer. My cousin and his wife, who are both very good-natured and hard-working, took great delight in their little farm, and have laboured persistently and devotedly to improve and develop it. A very bad harvest had, however, compelled them to reduce their livestock to eight cows, two horses and twelve pigs. They also had a poultry farm which supplied Linz with fowls and eggs. By dint of careful management they had enough fodder for their animals and poultry and were able to feed themselves and their two maids simply but sufficiently. The little farm also yielded a modest net profit, which was always employed in improvements and repairs, since they had no children. My cousin was popular with his neighbours and respected by the authorities. He had never tried to evade the taxes demanded by the State, although they were a heavy burden on his farm. Liesbeth wrote to me that she had been placed in a pretty, sunny attic room with a view over the lovely hilly Hinterland of the Danube, and had felt herself very much benefited by the rest and good air. My cousin and his wife were not able to give her much of their time, for there is work for the farmer even in the winter, but they gave her plenty of delicacies such as fresh milk, butter, eggs and honey, of which we in the towns had long been deprived, and my cousin spoke of having Wolfi to stay there for some time, at which Liesbeth was overjoyed. Then came the fatal Sunday on which all their hopes and the fruits of years of toil were sacrificed to a mob of plunderers. I quote Liesbeth's letter: "I had driven with Uncle and Aunt to church at Linz. The nearer we approached Linz the more crowded became the usually deserted high road. All kinds of odd-looking individuals met us. One man wearing three hats, one set on top of the other, and at least two coats, excited our amusement. My uncle declared that he must have a great deal of money to spare to be able to dress so extravagantly. We met people drawing carts that were piled high with tinned foods of every description. The nearer we approached the town the more remarkable became the scene which presented itself to our eyes. A man and a woman

were seated in a ditch by the side of the road and, without the least embarrassment, were changing their very ragged garments for quite new ones. 'Hurry up,' the woman shouted to us, 'or there'll be nothing left!' We did not understand this remark until we passed the first plundered shops. Linz, a prosperous provincial town whose citizens are as a rule well if not fashionably dressed, now presented quite a different aspect. Individuals who did not seem to belong here at all and who looked suspiciously like Russian soldiers were mingling with the new Volkswehr and with the numerous shabbily dressed men and women. All of them seemed very excited; they were running to and fro and yelling. Bundles were being tied up and dragged away. Our Styrian cart was held up several times, and we were frequently hailed with shouts of which we took no notice. The Church square was so packed that it was hopeless to think of proceeding any further. We saw that the inn at which Uncle and Aunt usually stopped for a little refreshment after the Mass was completely devastated. The innkeeper caught sight of us and hurried up. The old man was almost in tears. He could not open his inn because the whole of the furniture had been smashed and all the provisions had been stolen. He strongly advised my uncle to drive home, since the ringleaders of the mob, having done their work thoroughly at Linz, were inciting their followers to ransack the neighbourhood. A police force of two hundred men was expected that very day, but they would be too late to avert disaster. We resolved to drive home immediately. Peaceful Linz looked as if it had been visited by an earthquake. Articles of furniture smashed beyond all recognition littered the pavements. But not only provision shops, inns, cafes and drapers' shops had been ransacked. Jewellers and watchmakers, too, had been unable to defend their wares from the mob. "My uncle urged on the horse, while Aunt was filled with evil forebodings. In the lane, which winds in the direction of my uncle's farm at the foot of the hill through wintry fields and meadows, we noticed a troop of about eighty to a hundred men and women. They were bawling and singing and driving in their midst a cart harnessed with a brown horse. The distance was too great to enable us to distinguish individual faces, but suddenly Uncle exclaimed: 'They're driving away Hansl and our cart!' Without another word he leapt to the ground, throwing the reins to Aunt. As he has a stiff leg owing to an injury to his knee, he could only advance slowly across the frozen snow-covered fields towards the road, where he meant to intercept the troop. Not until then did Aunt and I grasp the situation. 'Franzl,' called my aunt in a despairing voice, 'Franzl, please stay here!' And, when my uncle refused to listen, she threw the reins to me, jumped from the cart and began to run after him. I was not used to managing horses and sat there in the cart, helpless and agitated, with the reins in my hand, looking anxiously after my uncle and aunt as they hurried across the frozen fields towards the chain of hills about eight hundred paces distant. But it seems that when our need is sorest God's help is nearest. Already in the distance I saw approaching me on the high road at a rapid pace a motor lorry packed with men. When it was nearer I saw that it contained about twenty gendarmes. As our cart was standing in the middle of the road, and the big lorry could pass neither to the right nor to the left the chauffeur began to sound his hooter. I did not dare, however, to turn the horse to the side of the road, so that I unintentionally forced the chauffeur to bring the lorry to a standstill. 'What's the matter?' he called out to me, not understanding why I did not move the cart out of the way. One of the gendarmes had jumped down and came up to me. I explained my predicament and pointed to my uncle and aunt, who were steadily advancing towards the lane. I told the gendarme that the horse had been stolen from my uncle and pointed to where the robbers were now hidden in a

bend of the road screened by a hill. 'Is Böckling, of Lengbüchl, your uncle ?' asked the gendarme. And when I answered in the affirmative. 'They've sacked the place. We've just come from there.' And he walked over quickly to the other gendarmes, who had now all jumped down and were hurrying after my uncle and aunt. The gendarmes ran better than Uncle and Aunt and had soon overtaken them. I became more and more agitated when the troop of plunderers once more came into sight. I heard a few shots fired after them by the gendarmes, and then I saw the robbers disappear among the hills in disorderly flight. Horse and cart were left behind. Some of the gendarmes set off in pursuit, while Uncle took Hansl by the bridle and led him towards me with the cart jolting along behind. Aunt joined him, and they stood by the side of the road, deeply agitated and distressed. In the cart I saw three slaughtered pigs. In addition, some pieces of slaughtered cows and pigs and a few dead hens were lying in an untidy heap. 'My God, my God,' wailed my aunt. 'What will things be like at home? I daren't go there.' Uncle did not say much. Aided by the driver of the lorry, he got the cart on to the road. Then he picked up the reins and drove on with Hansl, while my aunt took charge of the Styrian cart. Two gendarmes accompanied us in order to ascertain the damage. 'If only 'they didn't always destroy everything,' said one of them. 'As for their being hungry, that's not surprising.' We were prepared for the worst. The gates of the farmyard were wide open. There was not a sign of the servant girls. A pig which was apparently seriously injured but still living was lying in its own blood in the yard. The other pigs had run out through the open doors of their stall into the road. "The cow-shed was drenched in blood. One cow had been slaughtered where it stood and the warm flesh torn from the bones. The monsters had slit up the udder of the finest milch cow, so that she had to be put out of her misery immediately. In the granary the stores of grain and fodder were in a state of wild confusion. A rag soaked with petroleum which was still smouldering showed what these beasts in human form had intended. In the kitchen living-room, of which my aunt was so proud, not a thing had been left whole. 'Yes,' said one of the gendarmes, 'if we had not happened to pass here on our way to Linz you would have found nothing but a heap of ruins.' "Uncle estimates the damage at 100,000 peace kronen, (over £4,000) and no Insurance Company will pay him any compensation for his loss. He begs me to ask you whether you can let him have a little money so that he may at least be able to carry out the necessary repairs." This is Liesbeth's account. It is, of course, impossible for her to stay on at Lengbüchl, and I must rack my brains to think of some place where she can spend the rest of the winter without imposing too great a strain on my budget. Here in Vienna the labour leaders on the whole have the masses well in hand. Attempted revolts by the Vienna communists are, thank Heaven, only passing episodes. This comparative security of life and property in Vienna is mainly due to the efforts of the Viennese police under Police-President Schober, who have thereby earned the lasting gratitude of the citizens of Vienna. The Viennese police remained almost entirely unaffected by the poison of party politics and were constantly faced with the difficult task of quelling outbreaks of party feelings and rendering them innocuous. In Hungary the revolution is said to have been complete, and the communist leader, Bela Kun, is reported to have seized the reins of government. Karl talks of going to Budapest. Lately, however, he has been persistently urging Edith to marry him. His nervous, quarrelsome mood is a trial to us all, and Edith has decided to break off her engagement. Aunt Bertha's illness has taken a serious turn, and our hands are kept full looking after her. Edith and I share the nursing, and this at least affords Edith a good excuse for giving Karl less and less of her company. In addition to

chronic bone-softening, Aunt Bertha is suffering from acute inflammation of the left lung, which is dangerous at her age. We all do our best to alleviate and fight against her disease, but in this too we are thwarted by the difficulties of the food situation. Only one of our hens is laying and the difficulties of procuring fodder are increasing daily. Already I have to pay the illicit traders 5 to 6 kronen each for eggs and always have to reckon on finding some bad ones among them. Eggs, however, are still the only food which Aunt Bertha can take with any appetite, so that I am obliged to get them. My rabbit farm enables me to procure $\frac{1}{4}$ pint goat's milk daily in exchange for two rabbits a month. One of my neighbours, whose husband is a higher-grade government official, keeps a goat in her cellar. As they are only two in family, she has plenty of milk for her needs. On the other hand, she has hardly any meat, so we are able to help each other. As the milk keeps fresh for days in the open air, I was able to skim it on one occasion and from the cream to churn a very small quantity of butter. Wolfi, Liesbeth and Aunt Bertha each received a small piece of bread and butter, though unfortunately I was obliged to spread the butter very thin. It would never have occurred to any of us in peace time to eat butter made of goat's milk. "If only nothing worse befalls us," I said to Liesbeth, who was turning up her nose a little. Wolfi ate up his portion with relish, and Aunt Bertha would have praised the taste of something far worse just to please me. Edith has asked me to be present at a conversation which she means to have with Karl to-morrow.

JANUARY 31ST, 1919

KARL AND EDITH

The projected conversation between Edith, Karl, and myself never took place, and during the last few days Karl has not been home at all. I am worried about him, for after all he is my child and needs help just because of his nervous condition. On the day before he disappeared, he asked for the fur coat which had belonged to my husband. I pointed out that it would be too tight for him and would have to be altered; but he said that this was not necessary; he could use it as it was. I took this opportunity of asking him whether he did not mean to resume his medical studies, as he would have to work hard in order to be able to exercise his profession. He replied that there could be no question of this now, as he had far more important things to do, which he prized above any so-called profession. He had in fact already chosen a profession, although not in my bourgeois sense of the term. After a hasty leave-taking he left the house, and Edith, who came to us about an hour later in order to look after Aunt Bertha, told me as follows: As she was setting out from the Schönbrunnerstrasse, where her father lives, in order to come to us as usual, she met Karl and Arenstamm. Arenstamm was wearing my husband's fur coat. Karl went up to Edith and asked her to go with him to a cafe in the neighbourhood which Edith knew through her father to be a resort of the communists. As Karl urged her very persistently, saying that he had something important to tell her, and as he seemed very nervous and distraught, she did not dare to refuse. Arenstamm accompanied them. When they stepped out of the cold, fresh winter air into the smoky little cafe, Karl and Arenstamm were at once loudly greeted by several men and women, who addressed them as "comrades." Karl led Edith to a table at which two women and three men were seated. "Look, Edith," he said, "these are my best friends. They are quite different from the bourgeois people you are used to mixing with. I want you to learn to appreciate them." And in reply to a look of inquiry from one of the women, he explained: "This is my betrothed." The people of the table evinced a marked

mistrust of Edith and when Arenstamm offered her a seat, the younger of the two women got up ostentatiously and moved to the next table. Edith assured me that it would not, of course, ever have occurred to her to sit down at this table. The place was so repugnant to her that from the moment she entered it her one thought was how she could best get out of it as quickly as possible. When, however, this young woman displayed such discourteous hostility, Edith's curiosity was aroused. Karl followed the woman and spoke to her in a low tone, whereupon she struck the table with the palm of her hand and said: "She can go to the devil!" Edith felt that she was meant and perhaps it was for that very reason she remained. She asked Karl to sit down with her at a table by the window and to tell her the thing that he considered so important. Karl began to tell her about his great plans and all the wonderful successes which he had in prospect. He felt that she too, with her kind, generous heart, ought to adopt his views, for it was a question of freeing the poor and oppressed of the whole world from the clutches of their exploiters. He told her that he had been designated to go to Hungary and Russia, where he had to fulfil responsible tasks in the Soviet Governments. Then he tried to persuade Edith to go with him to Budapest, where they could be married without expense or formality. When she had once got away from her customary environment with its hampering prejudices, she would certainly understand and appreciate the greatness of his political aims and the value of his friends. Karl had obviously tried to exercise restraint in his explanations. He spoke in a low tone and glanced from time to time towards the table at which the young woman was seated. She, for her part, never took her eyes off Karl for a moment. Edith told me that she listened to Karl's remarks in silence and often without taking in what he said, for she was thinking all the while how she could word her answer so as not to irritate him. Just as he was repeating his urgent entreaty that she should accompany him to Budapest, the young woman leapt up and came towards them. Karl rose nervously, and the girl caught hold of his sleeve without any ceremony and drew him away from the table. Her not ill-looking but brutal and sensual face wore an expression of fury. Edith saw Karl try to pacify her and heard him call her by her Christian name, Lea. She saw them both go up to the table of the other "comrades," to whom Lea proclaimed her grievances in loud tones and with much vehement gesticulation. The others tried to calm her, the older woman several times giving vent to a shrill laugh. Then, as though impelled by a sudden resolution and before Karl could prevent her, Lea ran over to Edith's table. Edith stood up. Lea half closed her small black eyes with their dark lashes. Her full lips beneath a rather massive nose parted, laying bare two rows of white teeth. She thrust out her lower jaw with its square chin. Edith assured me that not for one moment did she experience any fear, though the expression of Lea's face was like that of some vicious beast of prey. "You doll!" she hissed out between her teeth in an unmistakably foreign accent. "You doll! If you don't look out..." At that moment Karl, who had followed her, seized her by the wrist and dragged her away from Edith. After vainly attempting to free herself from his grasp, she seized a china match holder with her free hand and flung it at Karl, who only by an adroit movement eluded the dangerous missile. Arenstamm, too, now intervened and the two men forced the struggling girl on to a seat. Lea, who was obviously suffering from an attack of hysteria, kept on screaming all the time: "I'll kill her; I'll do for her!" Of the other guests at the cafe, some gazed at this scene from their tables with an air of amusement and a few stood up in order to get a better view of what was going on. Apparently such incidents were by no means rare on these premises. A man standing not far from Edith's table, with a chewed cigar between his grimy fingers, walked up to her and

pointed with his thumb towards Lea, who was still writhing and screaming. "She's jealous, the vixen!" And then, with a glance at Karl: "A real swell, the doctor, all the women run after him." Then he fixed his eyes on Edith and surveyed her several times from top to toe with cool effrontery. "And she's reason to be jealous. The doctor might well prefer such a little angel." Edith told me that she was filled with a sense of loathing and turned away in disgust. She walked slowly to the door and reached the street without being stopped. Just as she was turning into a side street to make her way to us, she heard hurried footsteps behind her. It was Karl, who had run after her without his coat or cap. "Edith," he said, "you understand how distressing that was to me." He stood in front of her looking very crestfallen. "To please me you will..." Edith interrupted him: "Surely, after this you don't expect that I shall learn to appreciate your friends. So long as you seek your friends in such society we can have nothing more to do with one another." And she walked on as fast as she could while Karl strode by her side, trying to keep pace with her. "Edith, you can't let me go away like this. Who knows when we shall meet again?" "You have your freedom and you take advantage of it. Do what you believe to be your duty, but let me too be free to do mine." "Edith, does that mean...?" "That I have broken off my engagement to you." Karl's embarrassment had now completely disappeared. He blocked Edith's path and his eyes flashed angrily: "I won't agree to that. You have no reason to break off our engagement." "But I do break it off." Karl's angry face became pitifully distorted. "Edith, I can't live without you. Only you can give me rest when I am almost out of my senses for want of rest. Edith, I am afraid of going mad ... if you give me up!" His hands trembled and his eyes were full of entreaty. Edith felt the abhorrence which had possessed her give place to a profound pity. She took Karl's hand: "Go now wherever your unhappy duty calls you. Gather your experiences and taste them all to the dregs. And if ever you feel a craving for your mother and your family, come to them. We will help you to come back, back to us all!" Karl drew away his hand. The old obstinate mood took possession of him again. "Help to come back! I don't want to come back. I want nothing from any of you. I don't need any favours. It is I who will one day have to help you and not you me." He turned round without another word, without looking at Edith, and went back—to Lea. Edith's story moved me deeply. I, too, pitied poor Karl from the depths of my heart, and I became more and more convinced that his head-wound was the principal cause of his extravagant behaviour. But how was I to help him? He had repelled almost rudely a suggestion that he should go and see a doctor. Consequently I had never again exerted my very slight influence in this direction, for I wanted to avoid anything which might aggravate the estrangement between Karl and myself. His conduct to Edith and the episode with Lea proved to me that Karl's emotional life too was disordered. Edith's advice to him to do what he believed to be his duty and to grow wiser through experience was the right tactics, if any tactics could save him. Karl will always find the door open to him if he comes back and needs a home. Never will he hear a word of reproach or of ridicule from me if he flees home from his fantastic, unattainable ideals. How glad I should be if that day had already arrived and I could fold my child in my arms knowing him to be cured of this terrible mental disease. Aunt Bertha's condition is unfortunately worse. In spite of devoted nursing the inflammation has attacked the other lung and the physician has been obliged to use repeated stimulants to strengthen the action of the heart in order to tide over the crisis.

FEBRUARY 3RD, 1919

AUNT BERTHA'S DEATH

Yesterday night Aunt Bertha fell asleep for ever. After an apparent improvement in the evening she succumbed in the night to an attack of heart-weakness. Up to the last she was kind and affectionate and, mortally sick as she was, tried to soothe the cares and troubles of those around her. We were all very sad, and Wolfi, who for the first time has come into close contact with death, is in great distress. He cannot believe that never again will he be able to laugh and jest with his dear Aunt Bertha. He cried and sobbed passionately when the undertaker's men in their black clothes bore away the coffin. When we all left the churchyard after the funeral, he asked me whether poor Aunt Bertha was not afraid to stay there all alone. His little, childish brain cannot yet grasp the meaning of death, in which all human activities find their last rest. Again and again he asks me questions which show that he only looks upon Aunt Bertha's death as a temporary separation.

FEBRUARY 10TH, 1919

STILL NO END TO THE ARMISTICE OR THE BLOCKADE

Just to keep body and soul together is becoming more and more difficult. It is only possible to do so by perpetually breaking the more and more numerous laws and decrees, which would condemn us to certain death if we obeyed them. Aunt Bertha is an example of what would happen to us if we tried to live on our rations. When she came to my house with her acute bone-softening and oedema of the lower extremities, I and the doctor were obliged first of all to persuade her to eat some of the food which was not on the Government ration card. Again and again I had to prevent her from giving some of her food to others who seemed to be worse off than herself. I had hoped that I should soon be able to cure her of the bone-softening. My efforts were frustrated partly by her obstinacy and partly by the fact that I had not the resources for coping with the disease in its acute stage. When, after influenza and in some degree owing to the inadequate heating of our flat, she contracted inflammation of the lungs, she no longer had the power to resist this serious disease. She was a victim of the hunger blockade, and by no means the only one, for the high mortality of Vienna is solely attributable to the hunger blockade. Meanwhile Vienna is becoming more and more isolated. The political and party conflicts are becoming more acute, and this dissension is fanatically preached and encouraged by the labour leaders. As our Government is a socialist one and the populations of the plains, and, above all, the farmers, have no use for socialism, the provinces have stopped sending supplies to Vienna, for even the provincial towns have no food to spare and do not mean to make any sacrifices for the sake of "red Vienna." As there is no meat at all this week, not even the 7 dekagrammes (about 2½ ounces) to which our food-cards entitle us, we are getting 15 dekagrammes of oatmeal per head, which is really a welcome change from the eternal monotony of turnips and pickled cabbage. As the bread ration has also been cut down, I have tried to procure some sort of substitute for bread. A confectioner with whom I dealt in better days, showed me secretly a so-called honey loaf. Ten dekagrammes of this cost 4 kronen. In addition I bought a few biscuits which, though of diminutive size, cost 2 kronen apiece. The honey bread has this advantage, that, though it is not satisfying, it completely takes away one's appetite. The Americans and English are doing their best to alleviate our famine conditions. Lord Cavan sent us from Italy eighteen trucks of provisions to be distributed among the poorest classes of the population. Three trainloads of foodstuffs, escorted by an American military force

of a hundred men, have arrived here. This military force is the centre of interest of the Vienna population, particularly of certain feminine circles. The foreign officers are loaded with invitations from families who even now appear to be suffering hardly at all from the consequences of the hunger blockade. As to the luxury prevailing in these houses and the accommodating spirit manifested by certain of the wives and by other so-called ladies frequenting these circles, the foreign officers who take an objective view of things will no doubt have formed their own conclusions. The Entente demands that we should give up three-quarters of our whole rolling stock and all our agricultural machinery. This was a condition of the Armistice which now has to be fulfilled. A large proportion of the engines and rolling stock belonging to the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy, have not, of course, been in the possession of the present Austrian Republic for a long time, as our enemies detained all those which were in the territories occupied by them. The few which still remain within the frontiers of present-day Austria would vanish almost to nothing if one had to give up three-fourths of them. As regards the loss of all our agricultural machinery, this would be a catastrophe fraught with incalculable consequences. Fortunately, however, through the mediation of England, the fulfilment of this condition was at the last minute postponed to a later date. The Government kitchen fuel allowance of 15 kilogrammes of brown coal per week has been completely suspended. In place of it we have been offered 15 kilogrammes of soft wood. The American officers have brought about a suspension of the hostilities between the Carinthians and the Slovenes. The Slovenes have had to retreat behind a boundary line fixed by the Americans. This line divides the largest of the Carinthian lakes longitudinally into two halves and constitutes a source of fresh vexation and inconvenience to the population of the Carinthian frontier territory. A boundary like this, which cuts across private property, can never be final, and the Carinthians affected by it long more ardently than ever for peace, which they hope will put an end to these injustices.

FEBRUARY 15TH, 1919

THE ITALIANS AND OUR DEFENCELESSNESS

My son-in-law, Rudi, cannot bear me to talk of the "victors," meaning thereby the Entente troops: "We were not vanquished by the Entente troops. Our armies were still confident and eager to fight up to the last moment." And Rudi launches into enthusiastic praise of the heroism and self-sacrifice of the Austrian and German troops: "Were we not a thousand times more valiant than our enemies? We were driven from one Front to another in order to take part in one offensive after another. Every one of our comrades was wounded several times. Our artillery preparation became less and less effective and that of our enemy more and more devastating. We never had a proper night's rest and were always hungry, dirty and lousy. The soldiers were in rags which did not protect them from the cold and which they could not change. In rainy weather they were wet to the skin for days. Yet they were always good-humoured and ready to obey the order to attack, although the news from the Hinterland of starving women and children was not calculated to increase their zeal for battle. We were all heroes, matchless heroes!" And then Rudi related how he volunteered as a spy, and, aided by his perfect command of the French language, made a successful expedition through the French lines. It was at the end of September, when all of us at the Front and in the Hinterland were suffering extremities of want. He told us how he was able to observe the Entente troops, both white and coloured: "Well fed, well rested, well equipped; protected against wet, frequently

relieved and provided with new rifles and guns; revelling in all the foodstuffs which we had not tasted for years. And, in spite of all this, they did not defeat us; in spite of all this, during the last stage of the War one of our men was fighting against ten of theirs! We succumbed to hunger and physical privations, and to Wilson's Fourteen Points ... !" At this point his handsome, manly face flushed with anger to the roots of his hair. " ... To Wilson's Fourteen Points, which, by the deceitful promise of an honourable peace, kindled in us all an over-mastering desire for peace. Not one of us who held the Front in the West or in the East, in the North or in the South, has cause to be ashamed. Not a single officer nor a single soldier ... everyone of them did his duty and more than his duty. And the Entente troops never defeated us." I listened to this outpouring in silence and admired his invincible soldierly pride, but of what use is that to us now? We are vanquished, and even if hunger and the hunger blockade helped the Entente, they are the victors and can decide to-day over the weal and woe of the whole German people. And involuntarily I asked myself whether our complete helplessness and defencelessness does not lay a huge moral responsibility upon the victors? Unfortunately, the latter appear to think otherwise. The armistice conditions show no desire to make a noble gesture, but only to take full advantage of our helplessness. The Italians who are occupying Vienna have just furnished an example of this: 'Without waiting for the peace negotiations and the fixing of the peace terms, the Italians have demanded from us 150 famous pictures belonging to the Imperial galleries in Vienna. The entire fortune of the Emperor, as well as all his estates and other possessions, have been taken over by the Austrian Republic, so that these pictures now belong to the State. None the less, the Italians demand the immediate handing over of these pictures, which include some of the most famous works of Raphael, Titian, Correggio and other Italian masters. The Italians maintain that, after the evacuation of the Italian provinces by the Austrians, these pictures were removed to Vienna without the consent of the Italians. The Director of the Imperial Picture Galleries, Herr Glück, has proved, by means of a document of the year 1869, that all these pictures were transferred to Vienna with the consent of the Italian government and in accordance with the Treaty. Yet no protest and no negotiations have been able to avert this tremendous inroad upon our art treasures. The Italians threaten to stop all transport of foodstuffs from the South. In order not to perish of starvation we are forced to submit. The Italians are also removing from the Imperial library valuable manuscripts, which can be proved to have been acquired from monasteries or dealers in antiquities. They have also taken away the magnificent Lippizza horses, which were bred in the imperial Lippizza stud near Trieste and were removed to Laxenburg for safety during the War. I seek in vain for any evidence of a sense of responsibility towards a quite helpless and defenceless people.

FEBRUARY 26TH, 1919

My cousin, Ernst Böckling, from Lengbüchl near Linz, came to see us to-day. This cousin is the son of one of my mother's sisters, who had married Böckling, the Professor of Germanic Philology. Ernst Böckling completed his studies at the Agricultural Institute at Vienna, and then, after he had served his practical apprenticeship, became manager of the estates of an aristocratic landowner. Later he married the daughter of a Linz hotel proprietor, who brought a little dowry to add to his own savings, With this money they bought Lengbüchl, and by their personal industry and good management, developed it into a prosperous little model farm. My cousin, as a result of having been on the land and in constant intercourse with rustic neighbours

for so many years, had himself developed rather rustic manners. Though the effects of his early training were still evident, his education was very incomplete, and he had long since given up wearing town clothes. Perhaps just because they were childless, Böckling and his wife were very devoted to one another, and since their common love of country life was a further bond of union, the marriage was a very happy one. Both were extremely kind-hearted obliging people, and their recent misfortunes when their farm was plundered, provoked general sympathy. Böckling now wanted me to lend him money in order to enable him to carry out the most urgent repairs, and proposed that I should let him have this money in the form of a mortgage. I asked him to go with me to my bank adviser, for I was firmly resolved to help the honest fellow, but did not know whether I myself had any money to spare. He himself had 40,000 kronen in a Linz savings bank and wanted me to let him have a further 40,000 kronen. We therefore went to my friend at the bank. I told him my intention and found that he not only approved, but was even of opinion that purchase of or investment in land was a very wise action at the present day. I then asked timidly how much my securities were now worth, and was very agreeably surprised to learn that the value of my shares had increased by almost 50 per cent. I was as delighted as a child, for this meant that I could lend my cousin the money without greatly reducing my original resources. We went to the smaller bank, which had the shares in custody for me, and gave instructions for everything to be done in accordance with my cousin's wishes. I also had a little cash over for myself from the profit on my shares. I was really very grateful to my acquaintance at the bank for the advice he had given me, and his friend, an elderly gentleman whose appearance inspired confidence, recommended me to buy more shares, which he said were certain to increase in value. As the first share transaction had been so wonderfully successful, I asked the banker to effect the second. My cousin, too, accepted the banker's advice and instructed him to purchase the industrial securities which he recommended. "Do you know," he said to me on the way home, "I have never in my life gambled on the Stock Exchange, but now, when everything is topsy-turvy, I, too, must try my luck." I told Rudi about my successful speculation, but he did not at all approve, and declared that it was better to wait until everything was normal again and not to depart from one's old principles. Perhaps I was giddy with success, for I resolved once again to follow the advice of my banker. Before Böckling set out on his way back to Linz, he invited Liesbeth very cordially to visit him again. Their attic had escaped destruction, the kitchen-parlour they had repaired as best they could, and his wife would be delighted to have Liesbeth and Wolfi as their guests. Rudi, who was loth to be separated from Liesbeth, at first raised some general objections. But Wolfi, who had heard of the horses, pigs, cows and hens, decided the matter by his delight at this invitation; and I was in favour of accepting it for the sake of Liesbeth's health, as the air of Vienna certainly does not agree with her. I did my best to fit out the two of them for a long stay in the country in winter-time, for owing to the bad communications with Linz and other provincial towns we are practically cut off from such places. The postal service has also become very slow and unsatisfactory. I again hired the old cab-driver's conveyance, and paid the exorbitant price of 100 kronen (over £4) for the drive to the Danube quay. This journey would in peace time have cost at most 2 kronen. Our household has suddenly become very much diminished. We have lost Karl, Liesbeth, Wolfi and Aunt Bertha. Only Erni, Rudi, and I, in addition to Kathi, are left. Edith, who has taken a post with the American relief organisation which keeps her occupied the whole morning, comes to us almost every afternoon. As she

looks upon herself as completely free in relation to Karl, she has yielded to Erni's persuasion and is taking singing lessons of him. Erni takes the greatest pains over these singing lessons, so that while he is giving them it seems as if the only thing he cared for in the world were Edith's voice. He often criticises and finds fault, but is enthusiastic in his praise when anything pleases him especially. Edith is patient and eager, as she is in everything she does. She is often very despondent and disposed to think that she will never make any great progress, but then Erni encourages her and begs her not to lose heart. Rudi has prospects of a post as French correspondent with a newly-founded bank and is attending a commercial course for this purpose. We all vie with one another in trying to alleviate Erni's bitter lot as far as possible. He is composing a Requiem, which he means to dedicate to all those who fell in the War. This great composition engrosses his attention, to the exclusion of all other thoughts and interests. We are delighted that it is so, and try help him without being obtrusive. Edith, above all, seems to exercise a benign influence on his creative powers and helps him daily by copying his score. If Edith is detained by her father and cannot come to us in the afternoon, Erni does not work, but wanders about the flat in a state of nervous expectancy; I watch him open the hall door and listen for Edith's light quick step on the staircase. Although Edith has become almost indispensable to Erni, and Edith, too, does not convey the impression that in giving Erni her company she is making any sacrifice, their intercourse is altogether like that between brother and sister. Their manner with one another is entirely innocent and natural, without a trace of the confusion and restraint engendered by erotic sentiment. I mention this particularly, because any such unwelcome symptoms would make me fear complications which might jeopardise or even wreck completely this beautiful, innocent friendship between Erni and Edith.

MARCH 15TH, 1919

STILL NO PEACE

Five months after the Armistice we housewives are suffering more acutely than in the worst war years. The peace negotiations, in which only the representatives of the victorious powers and of the newly-founded states of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia take part, are constantly adjourned and protracted. In the Entente camp more and more voices proclaim that the murderous blockade is at length to be discontinued. France, who apparently predominates in all these discussions, again and again puts forward objections and demands more conferences. Meanwhile thousands of invalids, women, children and infants, are perishing of hunger and cold. There are no longer any swaddling bands in which to wrap the newly-born. People use paper, if they have any, or old scraps of material. Meat is no longer obtainable through the regulation channels, only dried cod, of which the Viennese have a horror despite their hunger. (The Entente have too little meat themselves to be able to spare us any, and American frozen meat is too expensive by the time it has crossed the ocean and reached Vienna.) I have joined in an appeal from the women of Vienna for the abolition of the Meat Centres. The only result of the Government control of meat seems to be that meat has become quite unobtainable. The farmers are clearly opposed to Government control, and the whole population suffers from this fact. I believe that meat will be easier to obtain if the sale of our meagre supplies of it is unrestricted. Perhaps I and the many other housewives are wrong, but nothing could be worse than the conditions under Government control. So away with the Centres. The following is an announcement of the Food Centres, which I give word for word :

"As meat and other foodstuffs are not at present available, in the 90th week only pickled cabbage at the reduced price of 30 heller per kilo, can be supplied to the most destitute. The Government dining rooms, public war kitchens and welfare institutions will be allotted 20 dekagrammes (about 7 ounces) per head." Thus the Government now has nothing but pickled cabbage to distribute on its food cards. We only exist thanks to charitable gifts from abroad, and the American food parcels in particular have saved the lives of many of us Viennese. To-day I read in the newspaper: "The President of the Salzburg Provincial Government has been arrested for illicit trading in the Government property entrusted to him, such as foodstuffs, leather, clothes, etc." These are the enemies in our own camp, but how few of them are detected! I have received a letter from my sister in Berlin, from which I quote a few passages: "Berlin is in a state of uproar. Civil war is raging in all parts of the city, so that I can no longer venture out of doors. The general strike and civil war in Berlin are not German but French. The war indemnity which the victors, seated round their green table, have decided to impose upon Germany, is fixed with the intention of loading the coming generation too with an overwhelming burden of debt. When a nation, like the German nation to-day, has lost faith in its own salvation, when it has swallowed its pride in the hope of being able to appease its hunger after the Armistice, when all hopes of a better future have been dispersed by an inhuman peace without regard to promises, then that nation does away with order and tries to achieve by force what can really only be achieved by systematic planning. If the Entente hatches further disaster instead of restoring normal conditions by a reasonable peace, then not only Germany but all the European countries will be threatened with incalculable internal dangers. Munich has indeed, with the aid of General Hoffmann, rid itself of its Bolshevik adventurers; we are still struggling against the Spartacists, who exploit the despair of the masses for the purpose of their political machinations. I believe that the bulk of the German people have too much sound sense to rush into such adventures, but they could hardly be blamed if they did succumb to the allurements of the Bolsheviks." This is what my sister writes. Meanwhile not only the crown lands but all the parishes outside Vienna have issued decrees forbidding people from other parts to enter their territories. Now, if I journey to Laxenburg, I am a smuggler and liable to arrest. The Volkswehr is now the supreme authority in connection with the supervision of food-distribution. Through the Volkswehr one can obtain transport permits for rucksacks, which are otherwise forbidden for everyday transport. Naturally a bourgeois cannot get a permit. But as business is done in these permits too, I have secured one through Schani. As long as my stock of cigars holds out, I shall have Schani's help, but I am filled with horror and alarm when I see how this precious possession is melting away. We hear that Germany, though she herself is suffering acute distress, has voluntarily cut down her flour ration in order to be able to help us starving Viennese. The Entente, at the instigation of the French, forbids the union of Germany with Austria, which was decreed at Weimar. Moreover, the Germans are suffering more and more violence and oppression in the territories occupied by the enemy.

MARCH 23RD, 1919

DEPARTURE OF THE EMPEROR AND THE IMPERIAL FAMILY FOR SWITZERLAND. FINAL RAISING OF THE BLOCKADE. ERNI AND EDITH.

We hear that the Emperor and the imperial family are to leave Schloss Eckartsau, where they are now residing, and go to Switzerland. The government declares that it can no longer guarantee the personal safety of the Emperor. Renner, the Chancellor, and the other members of the Socialist Government insisted that the Emperor should leave the country because he has refused to abdicate and only temporarily surrendered the conduct of Government affairs. The English Colonel Strutt and a few English soldiers are to accompany the Emperor and his family when they leave Austria. Poor young Emperor! Every well-disposed Austrian sympathises with him in this sorrowful moment when he has to leave his country against his will and journey towards so agonisingly uncertain a fate. Yesterday the Entente Powers decreed in Paris that the hunger blockade of German Austria was to be raised. Everyone in Austria breathed a sigh of relief. It is the first ray of light for years. But our joy is greatly marred by the fact that the blockade of Germany is to be continued. Our imports and exports are wholly dependent on the goodwill of our new neighbours, who will pay little or no heed to the raising of the blockade. If Germany, the one neighbour who is inspired with any good-will towards us, is still blockaded, the raising of the blockade will be a very illusory blessing. Perhaps, however, the Entente have realised that our position has become quite intolerable and this is the beginning of effectual and lasting help. In any case, it is now a matter of waiting and hoping for improvement. We have good news of Liesbeth and Wolfi, but Liesbeth, in view of her confinement at the end of April, will have to come home in three weeks' time at latest. With Kathi's help I have made some long clothes and undergarments for the child out of old linen sheets and other bed-clothes. In my housekeeping I have now learnt to treasure and make use of every scrap of linen or cotton or wool. It is amazing how inventive necessity has made us and how objects which in normal times would have been heedlessly thrown away, have now suddenly risen in value and are once more turned to use. Erni is busy composing and Edith copies out the notes for him. As the weather is now mild and pleasant, they both often sit on the verandah, which does not look very sightly with its piles of wood and coal, but still answers its purpose. Sometimes Edith takes Erni into the adjacent Schwarzenberg Park, where Erni can recognise the spring by the scent of the thawing earth. Edith also leads him at his request through the streets of the city and describes to him everything she sees, and Erni, whose nerves of smell and hearing have become incredibly keen since his blindness, often astonishes her by descriptions based exclusively on these two senses. Erni's sense of smell was always exceptionally acute. At the popular "Guessing Game," we were often amused at the way in which he guessed people directly by "smelling them out," as he said. "You ought to have been a sporting dog," my husband often said to him when he came home and smelt a visitor who had just left. He knew smokers by the scent of their particular tobacco. His sympathies and antipathies were very much influenced by this hypersensitiveness of his nerves of smell. He did not say: "I don't like this person or that," but "I don't like the smell of him." When he still had the use of his beautiful blue eyes, I often heard him say when he made the acquaintance of a pretty girl: "What a pity that she looks so charming and smells the reverse!" At the Front he endured tortures at first as the result of this hypersensibility, until he confided his trouble to a young army doctor, who effected a temporary cure by means of hypnotism. The effect of the hypnotism soon wore off, however. Any strong toilet scent was apt to give him a violent sick headache and so he avoided the company of women who used scent. In the twenty years of his young and now shattered life he had had little opportunity for intimate relations with young girls or women. He had always been

exceptionally mature and serene for his years. He did not seem to ask much from the life around him, but his inward life was all the more intense. It was in his beloved music that he lived to the full and expressed all his emotions. "Though man endures his suffering in silence, a god taught me to say what I endure!" These words, which Goethe put into the mouth of his Tasso, might well be applied to Erni. His music expresses the joy and agonies of his young life, and the sad and sombre tone-pictures of his new composition dedicated to "those who fell in the World War," faithfully reflect his present mood.

MARCH 30TH, 1919

HAMSTERER, SCHLEICHHÄNDLER, SCHIEBER

No improvement in conditions. Schani, our house-porter's son, has become a "soldiers' councillor" and is clearly very conscious of his new dignity. Rudi tells me that we must keep on good terms with him or he may involve us in all kinds of unpleasantnesses, for we live in a state whose legislative and governmental institutions have not yet been stabilised and may change any day. Our soldiers' councillor has been very gracious to me so far, thanks be to God. The Socialist Government of the new Austrian Republic has done away with the aristocracy, a measure calculated to raise the market value of the former aristocracy. On the other hand, the new lawgivers have created new dignities in the new Republic: soldiers' councillors, labour councillors, works councillors, pupils' councillors, students' councillors, civil servants' councillors, etc. In our present state of helplessness these new councillors excite in me an ironic amusement. In Austria we live on hopes, expectations and promises. The war years were times of wanton luxury in comparison with this hopeless spring. When I wake in the morning after a short sleep, I begin to rack my brains what I shall put on the table for dinner. Fat, butter, sugar, flour, and all the indispensable ingredients of the small ordinary dishes, are almost completely lacking. The small quantities which I can obtain by barter or at an exorbitant cost, are used up almost immediately, in spite of the utmost economy. The presents of food from abroad are drops in the ocean of Vienna's famine. Yesterday 800,000 tins of condensed milk were distributed by the English Mission. I too received a tin and was very glad and grateful, although one of these tins is only equivalent to about two pints of milk. I am always grateful when I can obtain any scarce article of food without effort on my own part. The growing lack of consideration for one's fellow-men which inevitably accompanies the growing food-shortage, impresses me very painfully. I can understand, however, that the instinct of self-preservation in people whose very existence is threatened should overrule all the moral laws. I can understand that robbery, theft, and pillage should become daily occurrences which fill those who still possess something with terror and alarm. It has become more and more frequent for better and more warmly clad people to be robbed of their clothes in the street, or for the fortunate possessors of good shoes and stockings to be stripped of them and obliged to go home barefoot. The proverb, "Hunger is the best sauce," has ceased to be true for us in Vienna; else our eternal pickled cabbage would be the best sauce in the world. If the Entente had sharp ears, the rumblings of hundreds of thousands of Austrian stomachs might make them a little nervous. The raising of the blockade has not in any way improved the food situation in Vienna, since Germany is still blockaded. We live now as before, by the favour of the Italians, who allow the presents of food for us to pass through Trieste, and also by the generosity of the Swiss, although the latter from all accounts have none too much for themselves. The Bolshevik rule in

Hungary has apparently frightened the Entente somewhat and given them food for thought. The Austrians are promised sufficient food-supplies so long as they maintain order in the country. This is evidently a warning to our communists not to copy Hungary's example. I can hardly believe that the Austrian communists would be so stupid, since they must know that in present-day Austria the well-to-do have become non-existent and that if they were to venture such an experiment, they themselves would be in danger of starving with the rest. In any case, the feeding of the members of my little household has already become an extremely difficult matter. Jealousy and envy flourish in this atmosphere, and if one has procured some harmless article of food, one is careful to conceal the fact from one's fellow-men. Hunger reigns inexorably and selects its dumb and uncomplaining victims above all from the middle classes.

"Hamsterer, Schleichhändler, Schieber"

These terms now have a contemptuous and abusive significance. The name "Hamsterer" (food-hoarder) is derived from that greedy little rodent, the hamster, which stores its winter supply of corn underground and often does serious damage to the cornfields. During the past war-years and the present agonising blockade I do not believe that there is a single housewife in Austria who has not hoarded, or at any rate would not have been thankful to hoard. The food-hoarders include every housewife who, in the times when it was very difficult to run even the most modest household, owing to the scarcity of the principal foodstuffs, such as sugar, fat, flour, eggs and milk, endeavoured, by collecting stocks of these necessary articles, to win at least a short respite from the overwhelming cares of shopping. The continual rises in price made hoarding almost a duty for a housewife. Yet hoarding became more difficult every week. No housewife who takes the blessings of unhampered shopping at fixed prices as a matter of course, should forget that war, in whatever form and in whatever place it may occur, can destroy these blessings at one blow. The constantly increasing food-scarcity, as well as the centralisation of all the essential foodstuffs by the Government, which have made it almost impossible for housewives to hoard, have merely resulted in the development of the unlawful profession of "Schleichhändler" (smuggler). I would venture to assert that these smugglers have saved the lives of many Viennese who would otherwise have succumbed to the hunger blockade. The Austrian State is not in a position to supply its citizens with the necessary foodstuffs. Since the Armistice the Government Food Centres have proved utterly unequal to their task. Our new neighbour States have attacked us by closing their frontiers against us. The generous American, English, Dutch and Swedish relief missions are able to alleviate the distress in certain cases, but they cannot satisfy the food requirements of the population as a whole. Where are the eight million souls confined within the Austrian frontiers, who have no land which they can call their own, to find the food with which to escape death from starvation? I often ask myself this question. But I, too, belong to these millions who fight daily for their food, for a bit of food that is often so modest that a beggar in time of peace would have refused it with indignation. And up to now I have only been able to make shift with the aid of food-hoarding and smugglers. At the present time, when, despite the raising of the blockade, we Austrians are starved and frozen by jealous neighbours, the authorities ought not to persecute but to encourage our smugglers. With the best will in the world, I cannot regard as enemies of the community these people who surreptitiously, at the risk of their lives, cross what are now foreign frontiers, in order to bring the Viennese a few pounds of meat, fat or flour. To-day my

smuggler brought me six pounds of white flour and two pounds of butter, for which I paid him one hundred kronen. I know that this is an enormous price, but neither white flour nor butter are to be had in Vienna. The smuggler who calls on me once a week in order to inquire whether he shall bring me something was a cab-driver in Vienna before the War, one of those typical Viennese cab-drivers who, with their rather brutal but always apt and ready wit, ruled the streets of Vienna from their box-seat. My smuggler would naturally much prefer to be driving his cab rather than perpetually risking health and liberty in his present unlawful calling. But the profession of cab-driver is extinct to-day. How could a cabman under existing conditions feed his good, fast horses? At present, my cab-driver assures me, it is hardly possible to feed a wretched hack for a one-horse carriage in Vienna, let alone two really good horses. "In Vienna people are glad if they can get a few oats to munch themselves," he remarked; and he is right, for groats and oatmeal are now eaten with relish and we are delighted if we can get them. When I objected to the high price, he described to me what difficulties and dangers he encountered in crossing the Hungarian frontier. He had to wait for two days and two nights before he could get across unobserved by the frontier guard. And the return was far more difficult still. For then one had spent one's money and got a load on one's back. They had fired after him when he was already in Austria, and he had a wife and children to feed. I asked him how he was able to pay in Hungary with Austrian money. He told me that the people were glad to take our re-stamped Austrian kronen in Hungary, for they came to Austria to buy all sorts of things. Furniture, fittings, pianos, carpets, which are to be had very cheaply in Vienna at the present day, are being bought up wholesale and taken abroad. Just to be able to eat, people who have nothing but their well-furnished houses sell one thing after another. The cabman-smuggler sighed as he pocketed his money and I gave him a cigar into the bargain. "A wretched business, this smuggling. But one must work if one wants to eat." I think that only strong, hardy and determined people can be smugglers, for often they are obliged to be on their feet for days at a time, and they must also be intimately acquainted with the foreign frontiers. But it seems to me a great mistake that these people are persecuted and harassed even in their own country. It frequently happens that the smuggler, after he has successfully terminated his expedition to the enemy country, is caught and robbed by our Volkswehr men. What the smuggler has imported at heavy sacrifice is taken from him without compensation. No wonder if, in consequence of this risk in his own country, his prices are extraordinarily high. The third profession which has arisen as a result of the War is that of "Schieber," or profiteer. This profession is closely connected with that of the "chain-trader." On these people no law could inflict too severe a penalty. They are the real enemies of the people, the out-and-out parasites. But, strange to say, they are able to pursue their dubious calling beneath the very eyes of the authorities. They smuggle Austrian goods abroad and bring us raw materials or foodstuffs of doubtful quality. Their intermediate profit is enormous, as is proved by the number of new rich who have engaged in such transactions. I hear that in England the Government control of foodstuffs has been suspended, as the supplies from the Colonies are sufficient. Happy England! She has colonies, seas, ships and sufficient supplies of foodstuffs. The women of England have appealed for a raising of the German hunger blockade, so that supplies may be sent to the starving nations of Europe by way of the German ports. How welcome and encouraging is this proof of humanity, for which I thank the women of England from my heart.

APRIL 6TH, 1919

NO IMPROVEMENT IN THE FOOD SITUATION. GOOD NEWS FROM LIESBETH AND WOLFI.
EDITH'S FOREIGN CURRENCY.

Our bread rations have been cut down by one-half from to-day. We hear that the European representatives of the Entente are discussing how to help us. I find myself picturing an assembly of doctors holding consultations concerning a patient who is seriously ill, without being able to come to any agreement. Meanwhile the patient without medical assistance may more or less gently breathe his last. The one helpful and energetic person, who, however, is not taking any share in the Entente councils, is Mr. Hoover. A train with American salt bacon, tinned foods and frozen meat has just arrived in Vienna. Edith, who is working with the American Mission, is also full of praise for Hoover and his fellow-workers. As she helps with the distribution of the American food, she can easily see that we get our share. True, the bacon is so salt that it has to be soaked for hours before there can be any question of using it, but we are very glad to have bacon at all. The other foreign missions —for instance, the Swiss, Dutch and Swedish —have, in view of the inadequate means of transport for their food supplies, initiated a big scheme for saving the Austrian children. Thousands of specially necessitous and undernourished children are to be placed with private families in Holland, Switzerland and Sweden, so that they may be properly fed and get back their strength. This scheme originated in the countries which were neutral during the World War, and has been specially welcomed by the Viennese. The headquarters of the Dutch Relief Mission are in the Augartenpalais, which up to the revolution was the residence of the Dowager Empress, the Archduchess Maria Josefa. As I wanted to obtain particulars of this scheme for helping the children, I went to the Augarten. The crowd outside the Dutch office was so large that the entry of the mothers and their children had to be regulated by the police. I had to stand for an hour in a crowd of quarrelling mothers and crying children before I could get into the house at all. Certainly the ground floor apartments of the Augartenpalais had never before housed such guests, who seemed quite out of place in the white and gold panelled rooms, with their parquet floors and crystal lustres. Badly dressed women of the lower classes predominated. Standing by the windows in the garden was a little knot of women with their children who obviously belonged to the middle class. Winter, the Deputy-Burgermeister, had asked the foreign missions to make no distinction between middle class families and proletarian families in the administration of their relief, since the middle class, even if they did not complain, were suffering acutely. The air in the waiting rooms was so foul that these middle-class mothers preferred to wait in the open air until their turn came. Inside, the soap shortage from which we have all long been suffering, and the fact that people were wearing clothes which were never changed, were conspicuously evident. As I only wanted to obtain some information for Wolfi's sake, I fought my way through the noisy, ill-smelling crowd. I admired the patience and devotion of the Dutch and Viennese ladies, who endured these surroundings for hours on end, and were always ready to give information and to make arrangements for the transport of the children. Two doctors examined the children to see if they were fit to be taken into private houses, for this, of course, was not possible if they were suffering from organic or infectious diseases. Often scenes ensued that were agonising both to the benefactors and the applicants, when one of the children had to be rejected. Often, too, threats and curses were heaped upon these untiring organisers of relief, for every mother had come here with the great hope of sending her hungry child to a place where it could eat its

fill. A very kind Dutch lady explained to me the nature of the whole scheme, and I realised that it was very much of a lottery whether the child in question drew a first prize or a blank in respect of the family in whose charge it was placed. For in Holland, as elsewhere, there are good people and bad. On the way home I pondered whether I should expose Wolfi to the dangers of an environment which might be morally injurious to him, or whether it would be better to tide him over the bad times here. After all, peace must be concluded some day, and this bloodless food and currency warfare come to an end. We have good news of Liesbeth and Wolfi. Wolfi has got back his strength splendidly, and Liesbeth too. The latter has gained in weight considerably, so that it seems as if her malady will soon be cured. On April 15th my cousin will bring them both back to Vienna, as we expect Liesbeth's confinement to take place at the end of the month. My cousin and his wife have succeeded in making good a part of the damage done by the pillagers. Böckling has become very much attached to Wolfi; the little fellow's charming disposition and eagerness to help others have made him beloved by all there as here. Liesbeth writes to me that Böckling and his wife would like Wolfi to stay with them for good, but Liesbeth and Rudi and I will not hear of this. Meanwhile Rudi has entered upon his duties at the bank, where he has proved himself an excellent and valuable worker. Of Karl we hear nothing. I am afraid that he has really drawn all the consequences of his political views and is now contending against the bourgeoisie, in whom he sees the greatest enemy of communism. Edith receives two dollars a day for her work with the American Relief Mission.: She is generally occupied only up to two o'clock in the afternoon and spends her free time with us when it is not claimed by her father. She gives her father one dollar a day and is proud and happy to be able to help him, as he cannot possibly live on his depreciated pre-war pension of 4 00 kronen a month. A day-labourer now receives 25 kronen for an eight-hour working day: that is to say, he receives double the pension paid to a colonel by the State. The second dollar Edith brings to me and asks me to take care of it for her. "She is a gold currency lady," says Erni teasingly, "and must be treated with special respect and veneration." Gold currencies and "gold currency people" play an interesting and important role among us in Austria. Americans, English, Italians and others are respected and admired here in Vienna, not because they overcame us with their guns and tanks, but because their pocketbooks are full of gold currency notes. With one of these pretty pieces of paper they can buy a whole pile of our ill-fated kronen, and because they repeatedly get the better of our poor krone in this new, hidden warfare, they are admired and courted. They are the real conquerors of Vienna, and we are far less able to defend ourselves against their gold currency than against their guns and tanks. In exchange for a few pretty foreign banknotes the Viennese, as though hypnotised, sell to the gold currency people their last valuables. I understand practically nothing of World-Economy and its structure. I am also prone to regard anything that I cannot understand with profound mistrust. In the old days I never troubled my head about rates of exchange. Now twice a day we are all forced to await the quotation of the Zurich Bourse with tense expectancy. On these quotations depend the weal and woe of all us Austrians. If there is a slight upward tendency, we all breathe a sigh of relief, while a fall in the Zurich quotation of the krone fills us with profound depression. Every fresh drop in its value is followed by a fresh wave of rising prices. I have often wondered how it is that the Zurich quotations can exercise such a fatal influence on our Austrian prices, and I have only been able to find one answer: The confidence of Austrian citizens in the currency administration of the State is shaken to its foundations. The State,

which is perpetually printing fresh banknotes, deceives us with the face value, which is supposed to represent the actual worth of the banknote. The 100-kronen note of to-day only resembles the 100-kronen note issued from the same press one or two years ago in respect of paper and inscription. In reality they are worlds apart. In the old days when I wanted to spend 100 kronen on purchases I knew before I left home what goods I could obtain for these 100 kronen. Now it is impossible for a housewife to say beforehand whether she can buy anything at all for her 100 kronen, and what she can procure for this amount depends on the most varied contingencies. A housewife who has had no experience of the horrors of currency depreciation has no idea what a blessing stable money is, and how glorious it is to be able to buy with the note in one's purse the article one had intended to buy at the price one had intended to pay. All these things which others take as a matter of course are unattainable dreams to us poor Austrian housewives. And I ask myself why our Government cannot put a stop to this depreciation of the krone, which, to put it frankly, is nothing else than legalised plundering of a corpse. The people with undepreciated currencies, who are courted and extolled by the poor hungry Austrians, are allowed to do just as they like. At the present time they are the masters of Vienna. The authorities dare not incur their displeasure. No one warns and advises the middle classes not to part with things like carpets, pictures and furniture whose intrinsic value is unimpaired, for the sake of a few scraps of foreign paper. The Viennese who is handed a large bundle of kronen still thinks that he has grown richer, without taking into account the enormous rises in price resulting from the Zurich quotations which come as a fresh surprise to him every day. The examples which the foreigners are furnishing us daily should make us all realise that at the present time the correct economic policy would be not to sell but to buy. But I hope from my heart that this agonising state of uncertainty and privation will soon terminate in a peace fraught with blessings for all of us.

APRIL 16TH, 1919

LIESBETH AND WOLFI AT HOME AGAIN

To-day Böckling brought Liesbeth and Wolfi home. Wolfi greeted me with eager excitement and told me that he himself had driven a large part of the way. As there was no likelihood of a railway or steamboat connection, Böckling had got out his one-horse carriage and they had done the journey from Linz to Vienna by road. In order not to over-tire the travellers or the horse, they had taken three days over the journey. Wolfi whispered to me mysteriously that his uncle was with the carriage and that Kathi was to go down in order to bring up some surprises. Wolfi and Liesbeth have recovered their health splendidly. Their cheeks are burnt brown with the spring sun, and Liesbeth told me that she had almost lost her cough, and that she no longer gets high temperatures. Kathi brought us up butter, eggs, household bread and honey as a present from my cousin's wife, so that Wolfi shall not miss the food to which he has grown accustomed in her house. Böckling put up the horse and carriage at an inn near by and came back to us. He tried to persuade us to let Wolfi go back with him to Linz. Although I feel that the child is better off with Böckling than with us, I only protested half-heartedly when Rudi declared that it was now the turn of Wolfi's father to have a little of his company. We thanked Böckling warmly for his kindness, and I promised him to use my influence so that Wolfi shall soon pay another visit to Lengbüchl, where he had been so very happy. In the ensuing days Wolfi had only one subject of conversation—Lengbüchl, and I can well believe him that everything is

better there than here. Wolfi finds in Erni a patient listener and tells him proudly how he was allowed to go hunting and fishing with his uncle.

ERNI

I believe the question whether there can be Platonic friendship or love, a purely spiritual relation, between a man and a woman has often been debated. I mean a man and woman within those age limits which make it natural to presume the presence of erotic emotions. After Edith's engagement to Karl, a very true bond of brotherly affection had continued between her and Erni. If a fine spiritual friendship can remain unimpaired between brother and sister, why should it be impossible between high-minded men and women unconnected by ties of blood? It is man's duty to be human always and everywhere, to show himself different from the beasts even in his natural instincts. Men who have given way to their animal nature and do not control their sexual impulses are more bestial than beasts, for they forget their humanity. Since the revolution, since freedom, the eternally legendary, has once more become the catchword of the multitude, and men have sought to "free" themselves at one stroke from ancient, historical, and well-tried customs, one encounters everywhere that bogus freedom of intercourse between a man and woman, in which the worst of the bargain invariably falls to the woman. In that emancipation which is so cunningly tricked out for the multitude with empty but resounding words, emancipation from sex hunger is a common catchword. We already hear and see with horror among the young people of to-day the influence of these suggestive and misleading exaggerations. All my three sons were fine young men, well developed in body and mind. I never noticed in any of them any sign of the sex hunger of which so much is said nowadays in young people's lectures, meetings and publications that they end by discovering it in themselves and brooding on it. I confess reluctantly that I had with shame come to believe that Karl, owing to the bad and undoubtedly unrestrained society into which he had fallen, had himself lost sexual restraint. But why should Erni let his brotherly friendship for Edith give place to another feeling which could only mar the pleasant harmony of their relations? Yet I felt uneasy about him, and it was to my grief that I found my anxiety justified when, a few days ago, I was sitting in the parlour, apparently unobserved by Erni. He accompanied Edith, who had written out some music for him, to the door of the vestibule. I had been busy over my sewing, without disturbing them, and I was sitting quite still in the armchair beside my work-table when Erni came back into the room. He seemed not to have noticed that I was there, for he groped his way to the piano, where the music-chest stood, and caught hold of a little knitted jacket which Edith always took off when she put on her outdoor coat. For a minute or two he held this jacket in both hands, carefully, as though he were afraid of crushing it. With his head bent slightly forward, he stood as though he were hesitating, breathing deeply. Then, as if succumbing to an impulse he vainly sought to resist, he pressed the jacket to his face gently and tenderly, and, as though smelling a bunch of roses, he inhaled deeply and audibly the scent, probably only perceptible to his super-sensitive nerves, which must have been the scent of Edith's tender body. Then, with a groan of pain and almost in anger, he threw the jacket back on to the piano. He sat down and began one of his wonderfully beautiful improvisations, his music expressing all the unquiet of his tormented heart. He did not however stay long at the piano. He jumped up and went out of the room, giving me the opportunity to leave it also, unnoticed by him. He called for me outside and I answered. He asked me if Wolfi might go with

him to the church which was quite near. The kindly priest of this church had given Erni leave to use the organ, and this was a very considerable help in the composition of his Requiem. When I asked if Edith were to fetch him away, as she had often done, he replied that there was no need for this as he would ask the sexton to lead him across the street. He would send Wolfi back from the church door. For once I was thankful that Erni could not see the anxious glances I bent searchingly on his handsome, spiritual face with its poor dead eyes. I tried to force myself to say something about my discovery, but no words came to my lips. By the time Edith returned I had made up my mind to keep what I had noticed to myself, to be on the watch, and to help my poor boy as much as I could. For I am very afraid that he will be unequal to the great nervous strain which an unhappy love affair would mean for one so grievously disappointed by life.

APRIL 27TH, 1919

On April 25th Liesbeth gave birth to a little daughter who weighed just over 6t pounds. Her labour was very difficult and protracted. The doctor had to use instruments and we went through hours of terrible agitation and anxiety. Rudi said afterwards in his joking way that he had experienced all the pains of childbirth and would take good care not to put himself in such a position again. The doctor insisted that Liesbeth had enough milk and must nurse the child herself. Rudi and I were a little sceptical about this, for Liesbeth's health does not seem to us to be as yet sufficiently established to allow her to make the effort of suckling without suffering serious injury. The doctor's opinion, however, and Liesbeth's own urgent wish to nurse the child herself naturally decided the question and relieved us of the very difficult task of feeding an infant artificially at a time when there is such a dearth of milk. Liesbeth had moved into Aunt Bertha's old room for her confinement, and as we have had a very wintry April I have had trouble in keeping the room at the right temperature for the baby. Wolfi was ungallant enough to think his little sister, who was the colour of raw beef-steak, very ugly. "Granny," he said, when he was led up to the little bath in which the midwife was bathing the new arrival for the first time, "Granny, Uncle Böckling's new baby pigs are much prettier." And when the child opened her toothless little mouth to scream, Wolfi turned away contemptuously. "The baby pigs have nicer voices than little sister," he said.

MAY 17TH, 1919

ONE TROUBLE AFTER ANOTHER

In spite of all my pains I did not succeed in procuring for Liesbeth the milk she needed. She was growing less and less able to nurse her baby, and as she had very little appetite she was losing weight, and my little grand-daughter too was putting on less weight than we could wish. I tried to accustom the child to goat's milk mixed with a little water, but the result of my well-meant attempt was a bad attack of diarrhoea. As the foreign missions distribute at most one tin of milk a week and the State supplies are constantly dwindling, the feeding of infants whose mothers cannot nurse them has become a problem whose gruesome result is the death or stunted growth of thousands and thousands of babies. Since little Liesl grew no better I had to let her be taken in to Professor Pirquet's Children's Clinic. I was shocked in the extreme when I paid my daily visits there to see the tragic effects of the hunger blockade on the little children of Vienna. Even the Clinic can no longer supply the needs of these innocent little victims of the Armistice. Here again it is the private charity of the foreign missions which saves many

children's lives, and checks rickets, scurvy and tuberculosis, at least in some cases. Liesl, who came into the world three weeks ago, has up to now put on only 5½ ounces. The tiny red morsel has become a pale, weakly baby, whom Wolfi, however, now prefers to Uncle Böckling's little pigs. After one week in the Clinic the child had so far recovered that I could take her home with me. As Liesbeth was again beginning to run a temperature, the doctor recommended an immediate rest cure in a sanatorium. But where was she to go? Foreign countries were barred to us, and owing to the lack of food supplies the Alland Clinic was closed down. The other public sanatorium in Austria has fallen into party hands and middle-class patients would certainly not be received in it. There was nothing left for it but to encroach once more on the kindness of Uncle and Aunt Böckling. To my letter of enquiry Böckling replied that he was ready to fetch Liesbeth away immediately. Liesbeth would have liked to take her children with her, but the doctor dissuaded her and even advised strongly that Wolfi and Liesl should be separated from her. This recommendation made Liesbeth very unhappy, and Wolfi too, for he had been looking forward very much to Lengbüchl and I had to console him for his disappointment with all sorts of promises. Rudi is an energetic father and leaves no stone unturned to procure for Liesl the quantity of milk which is vitally necessary for her, so that often I am able to feed the child almost normally.

NOVEMBER 19TH, 1919

For six long, sad months my diary has lain idle in my writing-table drawer. I could no longer summon up the energy to record in it the new blow dealt us by fate. On July 20th my dear, good Liesbeth died of general tuberculosis. She, too, was a victim of the War and its consequences. Soon after she went to the Böcklings her temperature began to rise. Her condition grew worse. She could no longer leave her bed, and the local doctor wished that I should be sent for as Aunt Böckling was unable to do the necessary nursing. Rudi relieved me at the beginning of July, when Liesbeth's condition seemed to be improving. But it was only the beginning of the end. Poor Liesbeth asked with tears for her children but we dared not satisfy this wish. During my absence Edith and Kathi looked after Erni, Wolfi, Rudi, and Liesl. The three former were fairly well, but Liesl develops very slowly and with many setbacks. During these six months the general position has grown alarmingly worse. The financial situation is no less than catastrophic; the krone is quoted in Zurich at 0.08 centimes; that is to say: the present-day krone is worth only the twelfth of a centime. Time seems to rush on like a stream in full spate. All who are caught in the whirlpool, and fail to find the current which will sweep them along on the surface, are drawn pitilessly into the depths. Rudi, who was plunged into deepest grief by Liesbeth's death, was like me forced by the tyrannical demands of the present and its thousand daily cares to go on fighting for the sake of the completely helpless members of our household, whose lives depended upon our efforts. Blind Erni, Wolfi, and tiny delicate Liesl would, without our help, inevitably have perished. When the earth had closed over Liesbeth in the little peaceful graveyard on the outskirts of Linz, Rudi stepped up to me, his eyes dimmed with tears. He gave me his good strong man's hand and mine gripped it. Not a word was spoken, but this silent handshake was our vow to the dead that we would never forsake her orphaned children but would take care of them always.

NOVEMBER 25TH, 1919

Rudi, having finished his commercial course, has obtained a post as French correspondent in a big bank. I have handed over my little fortune, now consisting entirely of industrial securities, to his management. If the face value of our krone were to be trusted, my fortune would no longer be as small as it used to be. In fact, I might find myself a millionaire day. Rudi, who understood little of stocks and shares, but as a newly-fledged bank clerk naturally took a great interest in all banking business, brought me every day, with a radiant face, news of rises in stock exchange quotations. He was able at a lucky moment to exchange a few of my shares for others, and once more the transaction yielded a not inconsiderable profit. I had, through Edith, let Aunt Bertha's room to a gentleman belonging to the American mission, who pays me ten times as much for one room as the rent of the whole flat. This disproportion, which bears so hard on house owners, between the rent payable to landlords and the proceeds accruing to tenants from the letting of single rooms, is due to the fact that during the war the Government passed a Rent Restriction Act, which in practice entirely deprives the house owners of their rights. They have not the right either to give notice to their tenants, or, like other merchants, to adjust the price of their wares to the fall in the value of the krone. The result is that tenants are paying their landlords one twelve-hundredth part of what their rent was in pre-war days, and can by letting rooms make their rent ten times over or more. Since the salaries of bank clerks are adjusted to the index of prices and to the depreciation of the krone, Rudi can quite well contribute to household expenses, so that for some time I have not had to sell any shares. It is evident that, with the depreciation of the currency, gambling on the stock exchange has become the fashion. Everywhere one sees new banks opening, and people who have succumbed to the lure of speculation stand in large groups before the lists of quotations and discuss their chances. Market-women with their fruit baskets rub shoulders with young men about town; shop-girls and servant-girls elbow fashionable ladies. They all want to buy and sell shares because this seems, for the moment, the only possible way not only to avoid losing all one's money but to add to it. The numerous new bankers are at the height of their prosperity, and run no risk at present of incurring reproaches if they advise their customers to make this or that investment, since the quotations of all shares are rising. The flight from the krone is the ruling factor in all economic transactions and naturally contributes to the constant depreciation of our money. Our Government is apparently content to look on helplessly at all this, and is powerless to guard fallen Austria from the vultures and jackals. Meanwhile the large numbers of unemployed, their passions fermented by the Communists, are seething with discontent. There has even been a big demonstration in front of the Parliament house, accompanied by acts of violence. The assembled mob attempted to set the Parliament house on fire. Mounted policemen were torn from their horses, which were slaughtered in the Ringstrasse and the warm bleeding flesh dragged away by the crowd. The police succeeded with difficulty in quelling the disturbance, but there were some casualties. The rioters clamoured for bread and work. Workmen's processions in the Ringstrasse, and demonstrations during which the windows of cafes and shops are broken are not infrequent. The contrast between poor and rich is increasingly marked. Side by side with unprecedented want among the bulk of the population, there is a striking display of luxury among those who are benefiting by the inflation. This minority, which makes a profit out of the misery of our country, is giving an unwarranted appearance of prosperity and plenty to certain districts of the city of Vienna. New night clubs are being opened, in spite of the lack of light and the difficulty of obtaining supplies, and the

gains of their owners are so enormous that they are indifferent to the penalties often imposed on them by the police. These clubs have, of course, the further effect of greatly intensifying the class-hatred of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. But against this evil too the Government seems to be powerless.

NOVEMBER 30TH, 1919

Still no peace! Still no coal and no food! The Entente has indeed ordered Czechoslovakia, as this lately founded state is called, to deliver coal to Austria, but the effect of the order has not got beyond the paper on which it was written. I have difficulty in heating even our sitting room, and from this Erni, who is working very hard at the piano, suffers in particular. I am always obliged to use thermophores and hot bottles for little Liesl, as she could not stand the low temperature of the rooms. Cold reigns not only in private houses but also in the public hospitals, where the death of two newly-born infants, owing to insufficient heating, has just been announced. The health of a further number of children is seriously endangered, since the temperature of the wards can barely be brought up to 13 degrees Celsius. When one reflects that all the infants in Vienna cannot be in the Clinic, one realises with horror how many of these poor underfed babies perish of cold in their parents' homes. Meanwhile negotiations are still in progress between the victors. Masses of paper are being accumulated in protocols and peace proposals while German and Austrian babies are freezing and starving. Fifty cases of scurvy in the Lainz workhouse are announced. This is the companion picture to that of the freezing, starving infants, a picture of helpless old men and women who, as a result of this post-war vindictiveness, perish for lack of vitamins in the place where they should be cared for and sheltered in their last years. The spectre of a complete bread famine broods over Vienna, for the lack of coal renders impossible even the transport of the food supplies arranged for by the missions and Mr. Hoover. The Viennese bakers cannot heat their ovens and want to give up baking. As the result of representations made to the Entente by the foreign missions, Germany has been ordered to supply Austria with coal. This means that Germany, who no longer has the free control of her coal mines, is allowed to make a few deliveries of coal to Austria. Meanwhile the devastation of the Wienerwald by the population of Vienna has assumed gigantic proportions. Entire slopes in the immediate neighbourhood of the town have been stripped of their timber indiscriminately. A heavy snowfall and a sudden thaw have made the streets of Vienna almost impassable. Because the sweepers are not paid more than 50 kronen a day, no one is to be found to sweep the streets. The monthly pension of an ex-Privy Councillor is to-day still 50 kronen. It is not surprising that such pensioners, of whom there are hundreds in Vienna, are able neither to live nor to die. Every wooden object in the streets or the squares, whether it be a bench or a paling or anything else, is recklessly broken up by the people, who take the wood home and burn it. I am not surprised at these acts which are prompted by the instinct of self-preservation at a time when, owing to the dearth of fuel, it is impossible either to cook or to heat. Our Food Control Office has succeeded in ensuring a half ration of bread for next week. Every inhabitant of Vienna can count upon a half loaf of bread and four ounces of flour.

DECEMBER 2ND, 1919

The Bolshevik Government in Hungary has been defeated. Horthy, who took over the provisional government, would willingly help Austria with food, but the Roumanians, who came

to liberate Hungary from the Bolsheviks, have carried all the Hungarian food supplies away with them on their return home. The districts between the Theiss and the Danube are now entirely dependent upon foreign help. The events in Hungary cause my thoughts to dwell on my son Karl, of whom we have heard nothing since he disappeared from Vienna. How glad I should be to know he was happy and contented! But how can he be so in essentially alien surroundings, among people with whom he can never really have any intimate ties of affection? To-day, after one year of Armistice, the little state of Austria with its big town of Vienna is like one of the thousands of starving and rickety children, with their stunted limbs and their unwieldy heads. To-day, one year after the beginning of the Armistice, we inhabitants of Austria are penned up behind prison doors, and completely dependent on the charity of foreign philanthropists. It seems that this long, painful truce, which the victor has imposed between the cessation of hostilities and the final peace, is to be used for crushing our last remnant of vital force and power of resistance, in order that we may submit to any peace terms that may be dictated to us. Not only deaths by the thousand but the loss of many years of life and the premature old age and infirmity of future generations will be the inevitable result of the terrible undernourishment from which the vast bulk of the population are suffering. The victors must not be surprised if the people, rendered desperate by the oppressive terms of the Armistice and by the hunger blockade, give ear to the siren strains of Bolshevism. The same inability to secure food supplies experienced by our Government is evident to-day in every little household. The Food Minister and the housewife—both alike must beg for bread that they may not starve. The new customs barriers existing to-day, which entirely throttle the previous free trade and traffic between Vienna and Brunn, Vienna and Budapest, Vienna and Trieste, Vienna and Prague, will ruin all Central Europe if they are permanently maintained. They will prove that the old monarchy of the Danube was no arbitrary structure, born of a conception of empire, but was a national economic necessity. What is happening in Europe now seems to me like the work of an unscrupulous surgeon, using his knife in systematic but senseless rage on the body of a patient entrusted to his care. Ostensibly he wishes to restore him to health, but his operations are deadlier than the disease. Everyone in Vienna complains of the selfishness of our Austrian peasants, who part with the provisions they can spare only at extortionate prices or in exchange for goods of far higher value. I have no cause for complaint against my Laxenburg friends, for they surprised me only last week, quite unasked, with some potatoes and flour, for which I was actually allowed to pay in money, a favour which I very much appreciated, for I prefer to part with bad money rather than valuable goods. Rudi was informed at the bank that the Government has passed a law providing for a capital levy of 65 per cent. Does not this, together with the Rent Restriction Act, smack a little of the much abused Bolshevism? So far, however, I have seen no signs of the famous socialistic liberty, equality, and fraternity.

DECEMBER 15TH, 1919

THE KRONE QUOTED AT 0.02 CENTIMES IN ZURICH. ERNI AND EDITH

After we had all conceived it almost impossible that the krone should depreciate yet further, the downward movement of the exchange rate in Zurich has made fresh progress and our impoverishment continues day by day. On the other hand, the value of my industrial investments is rising to an extent which seems to me incomprehensible and almost makes me

uneasy. Rudi laughs at me and swears that I was never so well advised as when I bought these shares.

ERNI

All my daily cares and sorrows, in particular Liesbeth's illness and death and the new anxiety about little Liesl's health, hindered me from continuing to watch Erni and Edith. Owing to the hours which had to be devoted every day to painful efforts to procure necessities for my household, I could spare very little special attention for Erni. Edith had once mentioned to me casually that he seemed to be out of humour and had become very reserved with her. She almost complained of it and was afraid that she had, unknowingly, done something to vex him. I reassured her, telling her that he was in any case rather overworked, as his Requiem was nearing its end, and that the conditions in which he had to work were a strain on his nerves. I was obliged, in fact, to leave Liesl in the sitting-room in her perambulator during the day as no other room in the house was warm enough for her. She was, on the whole, a quiet child and did not cry much, but all the same she did disturb Erni now and then, though Edith always promptly put an end to these little interruptions by taking the child out of her perambulator and nursing and hushing her. Edith told me of the following incident: Erni was just placing the notes in his box and was deep in the composition of his Requiem when Liesl began to cry. I will let Edith speak for herself. "I went quickly to the perambulator, picked up the screaming Liesl, and sat down with her in the armchair, for I knew she would calm down if I nursed her. She did stop crying at once, and I went on holding her in my arms, sitting quite still so as not to disturb Erni. Then he asked me if the child were in my lap, and I said she was. He came up to us and groped first for Liesl's little head; then, as though by accident, he passed his hand very lightly over my face. For a moment he stood thoughtfully in front of us; then he went to the piano and played the last part of his Requiem, which enraptured me with its exquisite harmonies, at first stormy and agitated, then quiet and mournful. Liesl had fallen asleep, and Erni, when he had finished playing, still sat at the piano. He did not speak, and I put the child back in her perambulator and left the room, feeling strangely moved." This is all I heard of Erni and Edith during these troubled anxious months. With me Erni was always affectionate and patient. He was evidently thinking about the operation on his eyes, for he asked me when we were to go and see the Professor. Wolfi, poor little fellow, who has, during his short life, seen two women he loved go down to the grave, clings the more lovingly to us all. He takes care of Erni, and already, with a comic air of superiority, he plays the part of a chivalrous elder brother to little Liesl.

DECEMBER 20TH, 1919

A GLOOMY CHRISTMAS

Erni, who often plays the organ in the neighbouring parish church, has been asked by the parish priest, who is a fine musician himself, and so has a just appreciation of Erni's great musical gifts, to play the prelude and the carol at the Christmas Midnight Mass. Erni agreed with very great pleasure and has begged Edith to manage the stops of the organ for him. They are, in consequence, oftener together than usual in the organ-loft, and Erni is always inventing new modulations in the prelude to the beautiful old Christmas hymn, "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht." He tells Edith what stops he wants for the different passages, and it seems as though this active collaboration would make this Christmas Eve a particularly beautiful one for the two young

people. Although Erni is at pains to appear always uniformly cheerful and calm with me, I have noticed small but unmistakable signs that he often has to fight against a deep inward depression. I have become convinced that he loves Edith but anxiously hides his love from her. As he asks me more and more frequently if I believe in the success of the operation on his eyes, I have come to the conclusion that he will never venture to open his heart to Edith while he is blind. But as I may have formed all these hypotheses merely because I cannot look at the matter objectively but only with a mother's exaggerated sympathy, and as the sequel may prove them to be mistaken, I have not yet dared to speak either to Erni or to Edith, but have resolved to abide by the old precept and not meddle with other people's love affairs. Moreover, my daily household cares make exacting demands on me, and this year's Christmas festival will be far more gloomy and sad even than the last, since our position has undergone no improvement, but is in many respects worse. The gaps which death has made in our little circle are particularly evident at such festivals. I confess that I dread this Christmas Eve and would prefer to confine our celebration of it to the Midnight Mass. Rudi took a load off my heart when he made this very proposal, and we have decided accordingly that we will merely give Wolfi his presents and otherwise keep Christmas together in church.

DECEMBER 26TH, 1919

UNEXPECTED HAPPINESS

No pain is uninterrupted, no misery unrelieved by joy. The Christmas Eve I had so dreaded arrived. I had this time prepared a little Christmas table for Wolfi only. A tiny artificial Christmas tree, which came from a confectioner's shop and was lit up by miniature candles, stood in the middle. Out of a camel's-hair rug I had, with Edith's help, manufactured a little coat and a cap, for Wolfi is already in the first class of the elementary school and has outgrown his old winter coat. Rudi gave his son the skates for which he had expressed an ardent desire, and Erni presented him with a pocket knife which he had wanted for a long time. O blessed days in which a pair of skates and a pocket-knife can bring happiness to its zenith! Of us all only Wolfi and Liesl could hope to gain anything from the future. The rest of us were weighed down beneath a burden of losses which could never be made good. The baker who supplies our rationed bread showed me, behind his counter, some small loaves and rolls made of white flour. He sold these "Christmas surprises" at 15 kronen each, in utmost secrecy, for if the police had got wind of them he might have found himself in serious trouble. Our good Viennese prewar loaves and rolls, which every inhabitant of the town used to be able to buy at 4 heller each, had long passed into history. Wolfi knew them only by report. I determined to be extravagant and bought one of these forbidden luxuries for each of us. Every member of the household found a roll or a little loaf on his plate, and these modest dainties which we had not tasted for so long were the sensation of this Christmas Eve. Everyone enjoyed their appetising crispness, and inevitably we recalled the times when we rejoiced in abundance of white rolls. Erni fingered his little loaf for a long time, and told Wolfi how, in the days when there were still rolls in Vienna, many other fine things, too, were to be had which to-day are only recollections, and how those days must at length return, if not for himself at least for Wolfi and his generation. Our menu was of the most primitive simplicity: oatmeal croquettes with potatoes (as housekeeper I was proud to have any potatoes in the house), and stewed apples cooked with raw sugar. Wolfi had persuaded his father to let him go to Midnight Mass with us, and so

he went off to have a sleep after first making me promise that I would be quite sure to wake him at the right time. I must not forget to say that owing to the low temperature of the room we all sat at table in our coats and yet were not comfortably warm. In order that Edith might be able to spend the evening with us I had asked her father too to be our guest. The silent and embittered man did not stay long, and I promised him that I would accompany Edith home after the Mass. Shortly before midnight we all set off and walked to church through the quiet, almost deserted streets. As the snow, which had fallen heavily a few days earlier, had not yet been swept away from the dark streets, our progress with our two invalids was difficult and slow. On the pavement were great lumps of frozen snow which might be dangerous even to people with sound legs and good eyes. The temperature was apparently rising, for large watery snowflakes had lately floated down and made the clear parts of the footpath very slippery. Rudi walked with two sticks and refused all other help, and I led Erni, who moved forward slowly, feeling with his foot at every step. Edith went ahead with Wolfi and gave warning of any obstacles. Finally we reached the church door. In previous years crowds of people thronged to the churches in which Midnight Mass was celebrated. Here, too, there was a change this year. The spacious baroque church was very well filled but there was no question of overcrowding. Edith led Erni to the organ-loft and the rest of us had no difficulty in securing places near the Christmas tree, which, too, was now a very modest one and was decked with only a few candles. Here as elsewhere the electric light was no longer functioning, and so the church was sparsely lit by the candles on the altar and a few tallow candles placed on the red marble pillars. "War poverty does not halt even at the church door," said Rudi, as he sank heavily on to the seat and adjusted his artificial legs. But I was resolved not to think here of war poverty, or to let myself be robbed of my Christmas mood. After a short prayer, in which I asked God to give me strength to go on fighting, I closed my eyes and waited. I knew Erni was to play the prelude before the Mass, and presently I heard the notes of the organ, soft and compelling, as though from a great distance. I knew that Erni would now be giving vent through his playing to all his prayers and his ardent longing that his sight might be restored to him. And as though the notes, like timid suitors, only by degrees ventured nearer and nearer, their lamentation and entreaty growing ever more insistent, the deeply-felt harmonics moved towards a bold, tremendous climax which broke like mighty waves against the pillars and arches of the wide lofty building, and then ebbed away again, back to far, sad distances where gradually they were lost in silence. Some of the worshippers had turned their heads round towards the organ-loft behind them. They might well listen in amazement to strains of such unearthly beauty. After the notes of Cherubini's Mass for instruments, played by the church organist, had died away, Erni began the prelude to the solemn hymn, "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht." Then, unexpectedly, Edith's sweet clear voice, at first faintly but then more and more boldly, joined in the soaring music of the Salicional which carries the melody. Edith sang one verse with a muted organ accompaniment, and when Erni drew out the louder organ stops, all of us who were in the church sang the second and third verses. Therewith the service came to an end. The church emptied quickly. All the musicians who had been playing in the organloft came down the steep little staircase by the west door. Rudi, Wolfi and I stood there and waited. This Christmas Eve had given me an experience. Erni's playing was like an intimation from Heaven that even when times were hardest I must still be thankful and brave. Thankful for all the goodness and the beauty which remained to us, and brave in order to regain or replace as far as possible the

goodness and beauty we had lost. Erni's playing had impressed Rudi too. "He is a divinely-inspired artist. His art can make up to him for the loss of his eyes." Since we had waited longer than seemed necessary and the sexton was beginning to put out the candles, Wolfi, who for some time had been attracted by the steep, narrow stone staircase leading up to the loft, offered to fetch the other two. As a watchful grandmother I would not let him go alone, and so I took him by the hand and we mounted the stairs together. Since we were both wearing snow-boots which muffled the sound of our footsteps, Erni and Edith might well not hear us at once. The staircase door opened in such a way as to afford us immediately a view of the whole loft, the raised keyboard in the middle and the organist's seat in front of it. I held back Wolfi, who wanted to rush forward, and he remained standing shyly by my side. I saw the thick candles which were placed one on either side of the keyboard, and in whose flickering light Edith's face stood out amid the surrounding darkness like a picture by an old master. Edith's face was bent a little downwards and she had put her arm round Erni, whose fair head rested on her shoulder. Thus they sat motionless, and when, in the emotion roused in me by this sight, I knocked against one of the chairs placed for the members of the orchestra, Edith looked across at me, smiling, but not in the least surprised nor startled. She nodded to me, and as I came nearer she said softly, smoothing Erni's hair with her left hand: "Mother, this is our Christmas surprise." Erni, without lifting his head from Edith's shoulder, said, stretching out his hand to me: "God has sent me a Christmas angel who from this day will see that I have peace on earth." I went behind the organ seat and took the two dear fair heads in my hands and kissed them with overflowing tenderness. Wolfi, completely puzzled, stood beside us, and when Edith rose and lifted him up and kissed him, he released himself with an air of embarrassment and ran down the stone stairs to join his father who was waiting below. Then the sexton came to ask us to leave the church, and we left the organ-loft without further explanation. We found that Rudi already had an inkling of the situation, for Wolfi had made use of a baroque angel to illustrate how Aunt Edith had put her arm round Uncle Erni. When we arrived home, happy but frozen through, Rudi quickly lit the little stove while I opened a tin of milk and heated some coffee, which we all drank in the best of spirits. We drank on this Christmas Eve to the health of the newly-betrothed couple, and Erni was as happy and cheerful as in pre-war days. Erni and Rudi and I clinked coffee-cups, and Erni assured us that no champagne could ever taste as good. As Edith had come back with us I persuaded her to stay for the rest of the night so that we could go on sitting happily together. Erni spoke of the coming operation on his eyes which would, he hoped, give him back his sight, and we all encouraged him in this belief. Then he began already to make plans for his marriage and hoped that his Requiem would soon make his name so that he might offer Edith an assured livelihood. Rudi could not congratulate him enough on his engagement, and considered that such a happy event should be suitably celebrated. He wants to entertain us all at one of the cafes where new wine is tasted, and as Edith and Erni agreed I could not refuse. "We all know Mother is no spoil-sport," he said, and he decided that we should go to Rockenbauer's in Grinzing on New Year's Day. I had already put Wolfi and little Liesl to bed. When I took Erni into his room, to make everything ready for him for the night, he said to me: "Mother, I hope you don't think that I dared to suggest chaining Edith to my fate?" Without waiting for my answer he went on: "It was Edith herself who took the initiative, and I only reproach myself that I did not resist her." "God bless Edith," I answered. "You will be happy."

JANUARY 3RD, 1920

A PAINFUL MEETING! STILL NO PEACE!

We really did go to Rockenbauer's in Grinzing on the evening of New Year's Day. A friend of Rudi's, who had served with his car in the Automobile Corps during the War, and who now earns his living as one of the few taxi-drivers in Vienna—their fares are mostly foreigners—offered to drive us to Grinzing in his car. Rudi chose Rockenbauer's as one of the liveliest cafes. "Erni must at least have lots to hear," he said, "even if we have to do his seeing for him."

"Hearing will be all right," answered Erni good-temperedly, "as long as I don't have too much smelling to do!" Towards nine in the evening we drove in the roomy car to Rockenbauer's cafe, "Auf ein Glaserl Wein," where that day, by way of exception, the legal closing hour was to be ten o'clock instead of eight. The fact that our position was still so agonisingly difficult and uncertain and that peace was not yet restored had apparently only affected this cafe in so far as the lighting was concerned. On every table a smoky candle was burning and the music stands of the orchestra were lit by acetylene lamps. The spacious, crowded room was well heated by a big iron stove in which no inconsiderable portion of the woods of Vienna was being turned to ashes. As we came in the band was playing the well-known Viennese song, "Das Lercherl von Hernals," and many of those present were singing the words noisily and out of tune. From this singing, one could form some idea of the amount of new wine that had been consumed. The innkeeper, no doubt, had every reason to feel satisfied. Our appearance made a visible sensation. Erni, with his fair hair and beautiful face, aroused lively sympathy on all sides when his blindness was noticed. As Edith, no less fair and lovely than himself, led him gently and carefully through the rows of tables to a recess which the host himself indicated to us, many eyes were fastened on them. Rudi, who was stumping on in front of me on his artificial limbs stood still for a minute and let his eyes wander critically over the company. "Look, Mother, quite a change here too! All war profiteers and speculators!" He was right. Not only did Erni get his fill of typical new wine rowdiness, but Rudi and I were struck by the great changes in the outward appearance of this old, respectable Viennese tavern. Between the jocular toasts painted on the walls hung white notices bearing the words "English spoken" or "Si parla italiano." When in the past I visited a restaurant of this sort with my husband or a few friends, it was really a place where one met all classes of the population of Vienna, sitting sociably and quietly, enjoying a glass of good wine. The cab-driver sat side by side with the count, the big manufacturer with the small tradesman. They were all "wine-tasters" and they drank the excellent liquor with the relish of connoisseurs and great good humour, and did not take a broad joke amiss. Erni, who let us have the benefit of the various impressions he received through his sharpened sense of hearing, was at first astonished by the many foreign languages he could detect amid the babel of voices. Close to our recess sat a large party of people who were taking pains to talk good Viennese, but who constantly relapsed into what was evidently their more familiar tongue, Yiddish. Among them, as though to mock us in these hungry times, there were some overfed women of the trading class. Together with their husbands, who were already the worse for wine, they ostentatiously consumed the sausages they had brought with them, as though expecting that all would envy them this wealth. These people were obviously in the provision trade, for, at the present day, the provision trade is the most lucrative of all. As they were sitting not far from us, Erni at once smelt the sausages, which were strongly

flavoured with garlic. What pleased Erni best was the little orchestra, which played really well. It consisted of a piano, a guitar, a harmonica and two violins. There was also a singer who in the intervals sang popular songs with great verve. Presently he came to the front of the little platform which was not far away from us, and in a rather nasal but soft tenor voice began the following song:

Seest thou yonder cloud that hovers
Where the moon and stars are bright?
Like that cloud art thou, my dear one,
Like that cloud so small and white.
Moon and stars are near thee, cloudlet;
Far, so far away they shine.
Come down from thy height, my cloudlet:
Let me put my lips to thine!
Leave me not, consumed by longing,
From afar to gaze at thee!
I have been thy fool, my cloudlet;
Let me now thy lover be !

For some times his eyes had been fastened on Edith, and now, as is the custom in these cafes, he stepped up to our table and stood near her so as to sing to her directly. He sang on:

Seest thou yonder cloud that hovers
Where the moon and stars are bright?
Like that cloud art thou, my dear one,
Like that cloud so small and white.
Come, thou little cloud, O come then!
Come, O come at last to me !
Moon and stars I'll be, and heaven,
All of them I'll be to thee!

As he sang he gazed at Edith with a lovesick expression, so that everyone's attention was concentrated on our table. Edith entered into the jest and laughed at the singer, at the same time blushing to the roots of her fair hair. Rudi took a note from his pocket and pressed it into the man's hand, for that is always the anticipated reward of such musical compliments. As the guests applauded vociferously, the man remained standing by our table, and began once more to sing his song with its slow jazz rhythm. He was not halfway through it when suddenly Karl appeared beside him. He seized him violently by the arm and said in a loud tone: "Don't annoy this lady!" The singer, who was experienced in dealing with tipsy guests and imagined Karl to be one of them, took him by the arm, and tried good-humouredly to persuade him to move away from our table. The proprietor too arrived on the scene and begged Karl not to disturb the evening's enjoyment, whereupon Karl broke loose from the singer and gave him a box on the ear which sent the poor fellow reeling. As he was about to turn on the proprietor too, a couple of waiters hurried up, and with their help Karl was forcibly removed from the cafe. All this

happened in a few minutes. Rudi had stood up, and Erni too had risen from his chair when he recognised Karl's voice and placed himself in front of Edith. Edith's eyes had been anxiously fixed on Karl. While he was being ejected I heard his voice shouting, "Bloodsuckers! Capitalists!" and other words. From among the guests, who made way for the struggling group consisting of Karl, the waiters and the proprietor, a showily dressed young woman stepped forward and followed Karl as he was being hustled out none too gently. Edith had, like myself, noticed this much rouged and powdered young person. "Lea," she whispered. "That is Lea." And she told us that this was the woman she had once seen at the cafe in the Schönbrunnerstrasse. "He is mad," said Rudi. "Only a madman could behave like that." As Rudi's friend was not to fetch us with his car for another half hour we were obliged to stay where we were, although this scene had filled us with such grief and anxiety that we would rather have gone home immediately. The proprietor apologised to us, assuring us that the disturbance would not be repeated as the offender, who was entirely unknown to him, had got into a car with a woman and driven off in the direction of the town. "It was well for him that he did," said the proprietor. "Otherwise I would have fetched the police and given him in charge." Thus Rudi's kindly meant celebration of Erni's and Edith's betrothal ended on this ugly, jarring note. When we reached home we discussed what was to be done. Since Karl had returned to Vienna we had to be prepared for a visit from him, and I felt that I could not possibly forbid him to resume possession of his now empty room. Rudi fired up when I said this, and declared that it was impossible to live under the same roof with such a fool, however sorry one might be for him. Erni too disagreed with me. Edith acted as a mediator, saying that if Karl would guarantee not to disturb the peace of the household we could not send him away in the event of his coming, for to do so would be to deprive him of all chance of a return to a normal way of life. But she added that she would prefer to avoid any explanations with Karl, which she unfortunately apprehends. For the expression of his face and the flickering, unsteady light in his eyes had filled her with horror. Nevertheless, she intended to inform him on the first opportunity of her engagement to Erni, in order immediately to put an end to any hopes he might entertain of some day winning her back. Although I did not wish to alarm the others to no purpose, Karl's behaviour and the abrupt manner in which he had accosted us in the cafe had filled me with deep concern and I reflected anxiously that his conduct might be yet another consequence of his head-wound. It filled me with sorrow to realise that since he seemed to have become completely estranged from us all, I was not in a position to help and advise him. It had struck us all that Karl, who while he was at home was ostentatiously careless in his dress, was yesterday wearing new and almost elegant civilian clothes. Lea's appearance, too, was, so Edith told me, ultra-fashionable in comparison with what it had been at the cafe in the Schönbrunnerstrasse. Since the day before yesterday we have seen nothing of Karl. We can only wait. Erni is obviously in a nervous state and he is happy and at rest only when Edith is near him. I have asked Kathi to let me know immediately if she meets Karl, for I mean at all costs to speak to him. Perhaps as his mother I shall have enough influence over his obstinate, uncontrolled mind to avert the scenes which we are dreading.

JANUARY 22ND, 1920

THE CURRENCY DEPRECIATING MORE AND MORE ; QUOTATIONS OF SHARES STILL RISING. NO PEACE.

Still no peace; on the contrary, we housewives have to fight harder than ever to secure food and cope with the currency depreciation. Edith can now exchange the two dollars a day which she is paid for her work at the American mission for 400 kronen. The pension of a privy councillor who has served the state for forty years amounts to 500 kronen a month. These former civil servants and officers, whose pensions have not been adjusted to the altered value of the currency like the wages of day labourers and manual workers, are undoubtedly the poorest of the poor in the state of Austria to-day. They have been accustomed to living perhaps modestly but at any rate suitably to their position, and all the years during which they enjoyed a settled income have rendered them absolutely unfitted for any kind of other employment—which has become very difficult to secure even by the young and robust. They are moreover too proud to press their claims. Thus it happens every day, again and again, that elderly retired officials of high rank collapse on the streets of Vienna from hunger and under-nourishment. And these are the more fortunate of their class, since they are carried in an ambulance to the hospital where for a few days at least they can eat their fill. Speculation on the stock exchange has spread to all ranks of the population, and shares rise like air-balloons to limitless heights. How can people fail to have their heads turned? Rudi and my banker congratulate me on every new rise, but they do not dispel the secret uneasiness which my growing wealth arouses in me. I have plenty of use for this wealth, which already amounts to millions and without which I and my family would have starved before now. The frozen meat imported from America costs 200 kronen a kilogramme, bacon 180 kronen. An English gift packet, which I was lucky enough to secure, was comparatively cheap. It cost 98 kronen and contained four tins of milk, half a pound of rice, half a pound of sugar, half a pound of flour, half a pound of cocoa. The good quality of these things also filled us with admiration, and I kept them under lock and key like valuables. All these days we have seen and heard nothing of Karl, so we must conclude that he has again left Vienna. A few days ago Schani called on me. When Kathi opened the door to him he stalked arrogantly and without waiting to be asked into the sitting-room. He was wearing a new uniform with red cord on his cap and sleeves and seemed very conscious of his own importance. None the less he advanced to where I was seated darning the linen and condescended to stretch out his hand to me. Since the revolution handshaking has become an unpleasant "modern" custom which seems intended to underline the democratic trend of our age and the notion of universal equality. Schani sat down without waiting to be asked. Then he began a long-winded explanation of the purpose of his visit. He started with some angry diatribes against "those cursed rascals, the peasants, who worry the lives out of the Viennese" and then told me that he belonged to the Food Control Committee of this district. Within the next few days all the houses in this neighbourhood were to be searched for provisions. Ever since we had had an American living in our house the general belief had been, he said, that we enjoyed a superfluity of everything, so that our flat in particular would be very thoroughly searched; we should therefore do well—he made the suggestion, of course, entirely in our interests—to hand over our cigars to his keeping. 'So that's what he's after,' I thought, and I turned over in my mind whether I should tell him that our supply of cigars was exhausted. But to do so might have been to lower myself in his estimation, which would at this time have been unwise. I went to the little cupboard where the cigars were always kept, and from the last box but one I took out a handful which I gave him, remarking that my remaining stock did not exceed the legal limit but that I thanked him for his advice. He thrust some of the cigars into the

pocket of his blouse, bit off the end of one of them, spat it out unconcernedly on to the floor, and warned me before he left the room not to admit any inspectors who might call unaccompanied by himself as there were so many swindlers about, and so forth. Then he shook my hand once more and went away. However his warning was of some service to me. I had already heard from acquaintances that even quite trifling quantities of food supplies were simply taken away by these Volkswehr Commissions. Small reserve supplies, which housewives had put on one side to provide against emergencies, were confiscated. I therefore began to hide in ingenious ways everything I had in the house, which was, unfortunately, very little. Blind Erni and Edith helped me. We hid flour in the big, bronzed, hollow plaster head of Pallas Athene which stood on the bookcase, and little packets of rice, sugar and beans in the stuffing of the upholstered furniture. "It is shameful," I said when we had finished, "that nowadays one has to hide the little bit of food that has been secured with so much difficulty, as though it were stolen goods!" "Things must change soon," said Edith consolingly. "When once peace is signed!" "When! That is what we've been saying ever since October, 1918," said Erni. "And now it's the 22nd of January, 1920." Edith caught hold of his hand, and his face lit up with a radiant smile. "Never mind," he said. "Even now everything is so much better and more beautiful than it used to be." And grasping Edith's hand in his own, he raised it to his lips.

JANUARY 24TH, 1920

LIESEL AGAIN. RETURN OF THE FIRST PRISONERS

In spite of great care and attention little Liesl has had another attack of intestinal catarrh, so severe that I have had once more to take her to the Clinic. The reason for this digestive trouble is not hard to seek. The child cannot get used to the almost daily changes of her milk, and thousands of infants are in the same case. Every fresh attack of this disorder endangers her life. During the last week she has had some sweetened and some unsweetened tinned milk, fresh boiled cow's milk, and goat's milk mixed with flour. Nowadays there is no guarantee whatsoever that milk is good and fresh. One is thankful if what is called milk looks and tastes like milk. We hear that a few sick prisoners-of-war have returned from Italy and France. Can this be the first step towards the longed-for peace?

FEBRUARY 2ND, 1920

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. Dense snow clouds obscured the sky, so that dusk had set in earlier than usual, and Kathi had already brought in the acetylene lamp. Owing to the dearth of fuel I have had to break up a few old boxes, which I had kept for an emergency, in order to keep the little stove alight and bring the sitting-room to a bearable temperature. In pre-war days the "bearable" temperatures in my household were never lower than 16 degrees Reaumur. To-day I find even 11 degrees Reaumur very bearable. This theory of relativity has not been discovered by Einstein. The wood from the boxes, which had been kept in the cellar, was damp, and when it began to burn, smoke puffed out into the room from time to time instead of going up the chimney. Erni, therefore, had groped his way to the balcony door, opened it and gone out on to the balcony. I was meanwhile busy trying to get the stove to burn properly, and when the air was free of smoke Erni came back into the sitting-room. "It smells like snow," he said, and sitting down at the piano he began to improvise softly. I love Erni's improvisations, and I sat still in the big armchair to listen to him. We were expecting Edith and

Rudi at any minute. Both their offices close at four. As Rudi's office is quite near the American mission, Edith had for the last few days been calling for him so that they might go home together. He asked her to do this, but I think the suggestion originated from Erni, who since the incident in the cafe has not liked Edith to go about alone. He seems to think that Karl may annoy her again in some way. As the old Viennese clock on the corner table struck half-past four, Erni stopped playing. "They ought to be back by now, Mother," he said. "They will be here in a moment. Perhaps Edith has been doing some shopping on the way." "That's impossible, Mother. You know the shops shut at four." "That's true. Then they'll be here all the sooner." At that moment the front-door bell rang. "There they are," said Erni, and went to meet them. I stayed quietly in my chair, for after hunting all over Vienna in the vain hope of securing a little lard, I was utterly exhausted. Edith and Rudi...

MARCH 16TH, 1920
IN HOSPITAL

The entry in my diary under the 2nd of February was made not at a later date, as is my wont, but on that very afternoon as I waited with Erni for Edith and Rudi. To-day I lie restored to life after six weeks of severe illness, but still weak, and confined to bed in the Wiedner hospital which is only a few steps away from our house. With my diary propped up on a stand which the kind Sister has placed across my bed, I have for the first time been reading what is written in it. I have read the words I wrote on the afternoon of the 2nd of February, the entry which ends with an unfinished sentence: "Edith and Rudi ... " There I broke off, and now that I lie convalescent in my bed in the hospital I will describe the frightful, stormy events of that afternoon. Edith and Rudi sat down at the dining-room table on which the acetylene lamp was standing and Kathi brought them their "dinner"—mashed potatoes and one poached egg each. Erni and I sat down at the table, too, to keep them company and to hear the news of the day.. Then we heard strange footsteps in the hall, and immediately the door was flung open violently and two Volkswehr men came into the room, "Ah," I said, "the Food Control Commission." And I stood up and went to meet our two unwelcome guests. One of them took out a tattered dirty official paper from the pocket of his blouse and handed it to me. I gave it back to him without looking at it. "Very well," I said. "But now I should like to know how you got into my house without ringing?" "The gentleman there has a key," said one of them, pointing to the door with his thumb. Until that moment none of us had been in the least surprised or agitated. We were prepared for the appearance of the Volkswehr any day, and would have borne the searching of our house for supplies as we bore all the other daily troubles and cares which are the consequences of a war. But "the gentleman there" changed the whole situation at one blow, for it was Karl who came into the room, wearing once more his old soldier's uniform, and again accompanied by the same woman, who this time, however, was shabbily dressed. For a moment he stood in the doorway, as though to take in the situation. His wild unsteady gaze rested on Rudi and Edith, then wandered from one to the other of us. At this moment, a heavy, wordless depression brooded over the whole room. Then the dark-haired girl who was peeping out from behind Karl squeezed in between him and the door. "Now then," she said to him over her shoulder, as though she were challenging or encouraging him to do something. "Now then!" And with a mocking grin which showed her strong white teeth, she sidled over to the piano and sat down on the stool. She began to strum an old street ditty, striking many wrong

notes, so that sensitive Erni sprang up in horror and put his hands to his ears. "What is happening?" he asked angrily, as he did not know and could not see what was going on, for up to now no one had uttered a word of explanation. But at this moment I stepped up to Karl. All I intended was to say a few affectionate words to him, and ask him how he was, in order to break the painful silence. He took no notice of me, but went up to Lea, who was still thumping on the piano with vicious insolence. He tore her hands brutally from the keys and shut the lid. "Get out!" he shouted; "Get out!" he repeated, looking threateningly at the two Volkswehr men. The men left the room reluctantly. But Lea remained standing sulkily by the door. Her eyes were like those of an angry cat. She stamped furiously with her foot: "I'm going to stay here!" And Karl, as though under the spell of those cat's eyes, closed the door behind the Volkswehr men. Then Lea leant carelessly against the door, with her hands behind her back, and looked at us all defiantly. "Now then," she said again, and her gaze wandered to Karl. He went slowly up to Rudi, who was obviously at a loss to know how to deal with him and was trying to stand up, leaning on the table. It was then that the terrible thing happened. With lightning swiftness Karl pulled out a revolver. In a voice that could only be the voice of a madman he shouted, "I'll settle with you and then with her, the—!" And before anyone could stop him, he fired, and poor Rudi, who had not yet succeeded in getting quite on to his legs, fell to the ground between the table and the seat, shot dead. Erni, who had recognised Karl's voice, changed though it was, had already groped his way to the tall mirror on the wall between the windows. On the shelf below it were two heavy majolica vases mounted in bronze. He seized one of them and threw it, exerting all his strength, in the direction whence the shot had come. Karl in his madness had fired a second shot at Rudi as he lay on the floor and was now aiming his revolver at Edith who clung to me trembling. At that moment the vase struck him violently on the chest and shoulder; the revolver went off ... and I lost consciousness. It was only later, much later, when my life was no longer in danger that Edith and Erni, who took turns at my bedside, told me what had happened. The majolica vase diverted Karl's third shot, which was intended for Edith, and the bullet passed through my left lung. Rudi and I lay unconscious on the floor, which was steeped in my blood. The two Volkswehr men had forced their way in at the sound of the first shot, but had been unable to prevent the second and third. Karl was for a moment half stunned by the heavy blow from the vase which Erni had thrown. The Volkswehr men seized this opportunity to disarm him and bind him with their leather belts. The shots had been heard all over the building, and the occupants had given the alarm to the police. When they heard that Rudi and I were hurt, they also informed the ambulance staff, who arrived within a few minutes. When they saw that nothing more could be done for Rudi, they removed me immediately to the neighbouring Wiedner hospital, where I have since been. Poor Karl became very violent after his arrest, and was taken to the isolation cell of the criminal hospital. After examination by a psychiatrist he was confined in the Steinhof state asylum as an incurable lunatic. Edith, gentle, tender Edith, displayed, as I heard on all sides, the most wonderful heroism. She did not lose her self-control or presence of mind for an instant. She saved me from bleeding to death by skilfully binding my wound, and she consoled and calmed Erni, who, in his blind helplessness, was on the verge of despair. As I wrote these words, Erni and Edith came in to see me. They brought me a dear, clumsy, childish letter from Wolfi. He was taken home to Lengbüchl by Uncle Böckling soon after the disaster. Little Liesl is still very delicate, but since she came back from the Clinic she has, under Kathi's and Edith's care, been well for the

time being. Erni surprised me with the news that his Requiem, which he entered for a competition at the Academy, has won a prize. Moreover, he has already found a German publisher for it, and it is to be performed in the big concert hall in the autumn, provided that conditions are by that time normal again, so that concerts can once more be given. Erni is proud and very, very happy. "And now I can think of marriage. But first I want to have that operation." "You must do nothing of the kind," said Edith, so emphatically that I looked up in astonishment. "We will get married before the operation. I want to be able to nurse my husband back to health." Edith got her way, and the date of their wedding is to coincide with that of my complete recovery. This will, in the doctor's opinion, be in a fortnight's time. The six weeks I have spent in hospital have not brought any alleviations to the Viennese, but ever since my life has been out of danger they have done me a great deal of good, thanks to the tender care of the doctors and nurses. I have been kept remote from all the cares of daily life, and I have had the knowledge that Edith is looking after our household as well as possible. Our American lodger has shown us the utmost kindness and sympathy during our great misfortunes, and helped Edith to secure the necessities of life. Edith and Erni have avoided telling me of the increased difficulty of obtaining supplies, but there has been news of it in the papers. I have seen, too, that the value of our krone has fallen to 0.02 Swiss centimes. But Erni and Edith were blissfully happy, and we made plans for their comfort when they are married. The Sister came into the room with a gentle reminder that supper was about to be served. Edith and Erni left me with a cheerful "Good-bye until to-morrow! " I have now lain for six weeks in my bed in the hospital under the devoted care of the doctors and nurses. I am not ashamed to confess that these weeks have afforded me a welcome respite during which I have gradually regained my strength after the last terrible nervous shock. I have lain quite still, letting myself be nursed and cared for, and thrusting anxieties and troubles far, far away. Now this interval of rest is drawing to an end. Life comes to meet me once more, and the past, too, with its sorrowful memories, pursues me. In the time that has elapsed since July, 1914, that is to say, during the last five and three-quarter years, I have been swept along by life as though by some destructive hurricane. The time has rushed swiftly by, swiftly and grimly. As though in some terrible, nerve-racking film staged by the devil himself, one frightful picture has given place to another, one tragic incident followed close upon the last. I think of my poor mad son whom the War has turned into a mental cripple, of my son missing in Russia, of my husband, of Liesbeth and Aunt Bertha whom the "war" in the Hinterland snatched away so prematurely. I think of Erni's radiant blue eyes which he had to sacrifice to the War at such an early age. I think of all the slaughter and the manifold atrocities which accompanied this war and which are still in process to-day. War, with its armoury of shells, poison gases, hunger and epidemics, continues its ravages long after it has nominally ceased. By encouraging brutality and licence it undermines all true humanity for many years after the last shot has been fired. And I ask myself must these things be ? What really is war? As I rack my brains the same answer constantly recurs to me. War is madness! War is a crime! It is hatched by madmen who are a serious danger to society though they appear to be of sound mind and, as such, are tolerated in our midst. These lunatics, by skilfully exciting and appealing to the noblest and most sacred feelings of which the human heart is capable, infect millions and millions with their war mania. They misuse these highest and holiest feelings, such as patriotism, self-sacrifice and death-defying courage, only, with cynical unconcern, to let them sink into the earth in streams of blood. War is a crime. It is the work of

the most dangerous though undetected criminals, who egg on millions of harmless peaceable men and force them to commit innumerable and terrible crimes against each other. War is a crime; in a few moments it destroys the masterpieces which artists and craftsmen have laboured at for years, and transforms blooming landscapes into devastated graveyards. I ask myself whether those who advocate and support a war should not be shut up in lunatic asylums or prisons before their dangerous mania can bear its devilish fruit. . And then I ask myself whether this most frightful of all wars, which even now is not at an end for the subjects of the vanquished Central Powers, might not serve for all time as a warning example, not only to the vanquished but also to the victors, since a next war might turn the victors of to-day into the vanquished. Amid all these tormenting questions and answers, suddenly, for no apparent reason, I thought of my little grandson, Wolfi. Soon after his mother's death, Wolfi had a visit from a little schoolfellow. I left the two boys alone, as I had some shopping to do in the neighbourhood. They were seated quietly at the table playing with a jig-saw puzzle. When I came back a quarter of an hour later they were both wearing soldiers' caps which Kathi had made for them out of newspaper. They had pokers in their hands and were sitting behind the backs of armchairs "in the trenches." Wolfi was an "Austrian," his friend a "Frenchman." They were "shooting" at each other. I had never lost my temper with Wolfi and never struck him. But this time each of the "enemy powers" got a box on the ear from me which was none too gentle. It was the expression of my very deep and spontaneous indignation. Wolfi, whose father and uncle were direct sacrifices to the War at the Front, was playing at war. Wolfi, rather puzzled and in tears, begged to be forgiven. I explained to him, as I had often done before, that war was the most abominable institution in the world and that it ought to be utterly done away with. Wolfi must promise me never to play at war again. "But Daddy says that when someone hits me I must hit him back," Wolfi answered rather defiantly. "And the Frenchman hit me." There it is. When someone hits us we think we must hit back. Therein lies the secret of all wars.

DECEMBER 21ST, 1923

STILL GRAVE HOUSEKEEPING DIFFICULTIES

Three and three-quarter years have passed March, 1920. The Peace of St. Germain has been signed. In the abnormal economic position in which we were placed it was received with apathy. Misfortune had stupefied us. This peace has not brought any alleviation to the Viennese housewives, for the economic war continues, and it is above all from the housewives of the middle and "propertied" classes that it demands uncounted sacrifices. Foodstuffs which three years ago were entirely unobtainable in Vienna and the rest of Austria can now be bought everywhere. But who can buy them? Whose income has kept pace with the tireless activities of the bank-note printing press? Although my holding in shares is worth, at to-day's quotation, more than ten million kronen, I am at my wits' end to know where to find money to buy food. I will let a few figures, more expressive than the most lively descriptions, speak for themselves. To-day the value of our krone is quoted in Zurich as 0.0070 ½ centimes. Its value is, however, higher than that of the German mark. In November, 1922, that is, about a year ago, a German mark still cost seventy Austrian kronen. To-day a million marks cost twenty-three Austrian heller. Some people, reputed to be clever, are buying German marks to-day. How many catastrophes are concealed behind these figures? In Berlin: One egg costs four milliard marks. One pound of butter sixty to seventy milliard marks. One loaf of bread twenty-five milliard

marks. One dollar is worth one billion marks. It is said that the printing of notes is to cease in Germany, and that the depreciated mark is to be replaced by a Rentenmark. The same is said of our krone. But no one knows what will be the relation between present and past values. Everything is wrapped in the uncertainty created by the constantly growing inflation. One pound sterling costs 316,000 Austrian kronen. One dollar costs 70,000 Austrian kronen. One kilogramme of sugar costs to-day 12,000 kronen. One kilogramme of coffee costs to-day 37,000 kronen. One kilogramme of rice costs to-day 10,000 kronen. A recent sentence passed in Vienna gives an idea of the currency depreciation. A workman found guilty of defamation of character was condemned to forty-eight hours' imprisonment or a fine of 500,000 kronen. The rises or quotations on the stock exchanges in Vienna and Berlin are precipitous. I have probably grown richer even while I have been writing these lines. But this state of things is unhealthy, feverish, menacing, and every day it destroys thousands of livelihoods. The weekly wage of a skilled workman in Vienna is between 750,000 and 900,000 kronen. The public will never get used to the fact that the imposing figures on our bank-notes cannot be harmonised with prices on the food market. As anyone who earns money at all apparently earns a great deal, he lives accordingly. The ease with which profits are made on the stock exchange encourages extravagant spending and enormously aggravates the light-mindedness of the Viennese. In consequence, Vienna displays a sham luxury which might best be compared with a frenzied dance on a sheet of ice which is already thawing. When the dancers will fall into the water is only a question of time. I will now turn from the general situation to say a few words more about my own little family. I have let two more rooms in my flat. I myself share my old bedroom with Wolfi and little Liesl, while Erni and Edith have taken up their quarters in the bedroom which used to belong to Rudi and Liesbeth. We still share the one sitting-room. Wolfi is now a pupil in the first class of the gymnasium, and in order that his upbringing shall not suffer from the loss of his father we have placed him in the school boarding house in our immediate neighbourhood. Although he is unmistakably a war child we have every reason to be satisfied with his physical and mental development. Liesl, now four years old, is a transparent, pale, often fretful little person. I am constantly anxious about her health. The defective feeding from which she suffered in the years after the War has plainly left its mark on her as on so many children of her age. A slight attack of rickets, now so widespread, has yielded to energetic treatment. Edith and Erni, who were married in May, 1920, live in the most blissful harmony. Although the operation which Erni underwent was unsuccessful, he has been so consoled and supported by Edith that he recovered from this heavy blow comparatively soon. As I expected, Edith gave Erni her entire devotion and entered into all his feelings. Life without her would now be unthinkable for him. She has, too, a full appreciation of his art, and he has not produced a single composition in which she has not had her share. Although his Requiem won a prize in 1920, it could not be played in public until a few days ago when there was a Christmas performance of it in the concert hall. It was the first concert which we had attended for years. We sat in one of the boxes next the orchestra. I had a bad attack of first-night fever and even went out into the corridor as the Requiem drew to a close. Already, during the interval, there had been much applause. When the last notes of the Requiescat in pace, sung by the choir, accompanied by the organ and orchestra, had died away, there was a spontaneous outburst of applause. Erni's appearance, when he was fetched from his box to thank the audience, provoked a sensation, and he had to respond to countless recalls.

JANUARY 2ND, 1924

THE NEW CURRENCY. THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

We poor harassed housewives had a disagreeable Christmas surprise. The kronen and heller, which have lately given us so much trouble and about which we have so often racked our brains, have been changed into schillings and groschen. It is a drastic change. For 15,000 kronen, we get—one schilling! Thousands of Austrians have been reduced during the last days to beggary. All who were not clever enough to hoard the forbidden stable currencies or gold have, without exception, suffered losses. To give an example: An old married couple, with whom I have been friendly for years, had a holding of Government stock amounting to two million pre-war kronen, which brought them in interest 80,000 pre-war kronen a year. They were justly regarded as rich people. To-day their stock brings them in eight new schillings a year. The State has at one stroke relieved itself of all its debts to the population in the form of bank-notes. Panic has seized the stock exchange. Shares, too, are being converted into the new schillings. My millions have dwindled to about a thousand new schillings. We, too, belong to-day to the new poor. There is light, heat, food and drink in Vienna to-day. Everything can be bought for the new schillings. If one has them! But who is lucky enough to have them? The middle class has been reduced to a proletariat. I, too, can escape from starvation only if I find new sources of income. So I must once more struggle and worry. Once more I must thrust all spiritual and cultural interests into the background, and like all the rest who find themselves in my position hunt for schillings in order to keep body and soul together. More fighting—daily, repeated, exasperating, demoralising offensive and defensive fighting of man against man. I feel that my strength is deserting me. I cannot go on. Younger generations are pressing forward ahead of us old people and we are only obstacles in their new paths. I would like to go away, far away, where there is peace, rest and contemplation. Peace— rest.

The motto of Erni's Requiem rings in my ears: "Requiescat in Pace." "May all rest in peace."

Dear God, will that ever be true for me again?

THE END